

9

VOX CLERI:
OR, THE
Sense of the Clergy,

Concerning the Making of
ALTERATIONS
IN THE
ESTABLISHED LITURGY:
WITH
REMARKS on the Discourse concerning the
Ecclesiastical COMMISSION, and several Letters for
ALTERATIONS.

To which is Added,
An Historical ACCOUNT
OF THE
Whole PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Present Convocation.

*My Son, fear thou the LORD, and the King: and meddle not with them that are
given to Change, Prov. xxiv. xxi.*

*Ipsa mutatio consuetudinis etiam quæ adjuvat utilitate novitate perturbat, Augusti. ad
Tannarium Ediff. 118. Cap. 5.*

Licensed, and Entred according to Order.

London: Printed, and are to be sold by R. Taylor, near Stationers-hall. 1690.

VOX CLERICI:
OF THE
Senate of the Clergy.

ALTERATIONS
IN THE
ESTABLISHED DISCIPLINE

REMARKS on the Disputes concerning the
Ecclesiastical Commission, and the
ALTERATIONS

TO WHICH ARE
AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
OF THE
Whole PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Present Convocation.

By SAMUEL JOHNSON, Esq.
of the Middle Temple, Barrister at Law.
LONDON: Printed and sold by J. DODD, at the Sign of the Crown, in Pall-mall; and by J. HODGKINS, at the Sign of the Anchor, in St. Dunstons Church-yard. 1763.

T H E

A U T H O R ' S

P R O T E S T A T I O N .

TO cure the Prejudices with which too many are already prepossessed, and to prevent the growth and mischievous effects, which they may produce; I have thought it necessary for the security of my self, and Brethren, to declare what our Perswasions are, as to the Present Government both in Church and State. And first we have by our Oaths promised to bear Faith and true Allegiance to the King and Queens Majesties: And the whole Clergy have renewed their Allegiance to their Majesties, and their adherence to the Church as Established, in their late Address of Thanks, &c. in these words, Whereby we doubt not but the Interest of the Protestant Religion in all other Protestant Churches (which is dear to us) will be better secured, &c. So that whoever do represent them as enemies, either to the Church or State, or any Protestant Churches, do falsely and maliciously reproach them, or interpret that to be their sin, which is their bounden duty, and care; and if these be our faults, I hope there is no sort of people, who joyn with us in living, in obedience to the Laws of the Land, and in the Communion of the Church, will entertain those Prejudices and hard thoughts of us, which some that are enemies to both, have from the Press, and from their Pulpits, scandalously suggested against us, to draw an Odium on the Consultations of the whole Clergy in Convocation, and to

The Author's Protestation.

*incense the people against them, as enemies to peace and reconciliation, I only crave this kindness from those that are influenced with these reports; 1. To consider, what our Adversaries report of us: And 2ly, what may be the reason of such reports. The Author of the second Letter (reflected on in the following Discourse) relating to the Convocation, hath these expressions concerning such as are not for Alterations. Pag. 6. I expect no less than that they become abhorred of the whole Nation, and as the common enemies of its peace be treated accordingly in every Parish where we live among them. P. 5. That we have maintained Trifles with unreasonable Rigor. And P. 6. we have already lost our reputation with the people by insisting too rigorously on those things. P. 9. That there is an obligation upon us of coming to a change not to be resisted without guilt. P. 20. That we are a base and false sort of men that can promise in adversity, and forget all when that is over. P. 22. That we shall lose the people of the Land, and give our Adversaries advantage over us to our utter ruin. P. 15. That the People are overthrown by Excommunications for a penny or two-penny cause. That we shall totally extinguish all Convocations for the future, and therefore he desires them to consider, whether the Church of England is now met together only to be *Felo's de se*, and (not to mention all his vile insinuations) that in P. 25. contains as much spite and venom as he could hold without breaking, such (saith he) as are most perversely bent against reason and conscience to do all the wickedness they can to gratifie a peevish humour. With these things he asperseth the whole Clergy in general, cloathing them as the Persecutors of old did the Christians, in Bears and Lions Skins, and so exposed them to be devoured by such creatures. But this Author comes to Particulars. And P. 25. says of the suspended Bishops (whom he acknowledgeth (as their greatest enemies must) that they are excellent men) yet says, if they should not consent to Alterations, The resentment of the State will be heavy on them*

The Author's Protestation.

as enemies to them and us, so as they will be immediately crush'd and fall to nothing. And more particularly he thus reflects on our worthy Prolocutor, as a man worthy of the death of the greatest Criminal. For thus he saith of him, We have no reason to thank him for his Speech, or his Motto, the last of which I suppose pleased him best, because it carried a double stab with it, the one against the Church, the other against his greatest Benefactor to promote him in it, *Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum* :

But 2ly, What is the cause of all this bitter zeal and inveterate malice, it is only because he fancieth they will not consent to such Alterations as shall be proposed to them ; but first it may well be supposed, that neither he nor they do yet know what Alterations will be, for none have been as yet proposed to them, and therefore to hang and draw before any crime be alledged against them, is a most barbarous practice, especially for one that is of the same Communion with them, and upon those whom he acknowledgeth to be such excellent men his Fathers and his Brethren. But thus did his Predecessors heretofore destroy the Church by such malicious insinuations from groundless fears and jealousies, as the Jews did Crucifie our Saviour. Venient Romani, They will bring in Popery. But when the Church hath defeated that Engine, and made it wholly useles by rooting up the very foundations of Popery, such men must have recourse to other inventions. And the noise of Persecution is raised against them, that they have been and would be again, if they had power, as great Persecutors as the Heathen Emperors were ; but this clamor the present Bishop of Salisbury with some others have silenced, proving undeniably that the Church of England had neither the temper nor the power to be of a Persecuting spirit.

And now the Cry is, That she is of a peevish and obstinate humour, that against Reason and Conscience hinders peace and reconciliation, and in sum saith our Author, That she is afraid of losing her Church power and Church-promotions ;

The Author's Protestation.

tions; though all the Nation knows with what general unanimity and Christian resolution, the Clergy hazarded all their Promotions, by refusing to publish the late Kings Declaration for Liberty of Conscience, and suspending the Penal Laws, which now their enemies plead for, in compliance with the present juncture of Affairs, and is as evident as any matter of fact can be; and little less evident is it, who they are that gape for the Preferments, which other men have signally deserved, and are legally possessed of; if this be not enough wholly to cure the prejudices which have been insinuated into the Minds of overcredulous and inconsiderate Men; yet I hope that which follows, if duly considered, may prevent the prejudicate Opinions of such as have any sober Principles, or serious Thoughts, lest unawares they be tempted to curse those that bless them in the Name of the Lord, and to bless those that curse their Father and Mother; in that heretofore most abused Scripture, Judges 5. 23. Curse ye Meroz; curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty; And blessed above Women shall they be that put their hands to the nail, and their right-hands to the workman's hammer, to smite off the head of Sifera, and destroy all the carved works of our Temples with Axes and Hammers. We are told that we have many Enemies, and so we ever had, and are like to have, as all may see, that read what comes from the Press, and what is preached from the Pulpit by Men of our own Communion: witness what was lately preached, in several Congregations; That we are raising within our own mind, and in the minds of the people, over whom we have any influence, all the soweriness and peevishness that is possible; That the things proposed (when yet there is nothing proposed) are of themselves so desirable, though there should be no Dissenter gained by them, and such as will tend to the making all the parts of our Offices both more unexceptionable, and more edifying; and if we let slip the present advantages that we have, what is to be said upon

The Author's Protestation.

upon it? but that this is of the Lord, who by it is punishing us for our other Sins; for our remissness in our Duties; for our neglect of our Pastoral Care; for our slackning that strictness of Life which becomes our Profession; for our indulging our selves too much in Sensuality and Laziness; and he thanks God for the Liberty, that the Service of God is secured to all Men; of following the Dictates of Conscience, in the Service of God; and that we are freed from all the Remnants of the worst part of Popery; that we had too long retained, I mean, *saieth he*, the Spirit of Persecution. *Though the same person had vindicated the Church from such a Spirit in several other Tracts; I shall only add, to make this Apology compleat, what Festus said of Agrippa, Acts 25. 23.* It seems to me unreasonable to send a Prisoner, and not withall to signify the Crimes laid against him. *And certainly, as yet, there are no Crimes laid against us of the Country, or you that are of the Convocation; for it cannot be a Crime in them that are Men of good Reputation, and honest Conversations, not to do that which is both against the Law of the Land, and against the Dictates of their own Consciences: It is not a Crime for a Man not to do what none as yet hath required of him to do; It is not a Crime for a Man to do that which he is well perswaded will be but lost labour when it is done; and yet for these things we are defamed, accused, and condemned, and exposed as so many Offenders to be executed at the will of the Rabble. Were it so, that the Question had been proposed, whether we would admit of Alterations, or not; yet all Law and Equity gives Malefactors the priviledge of making a defence, especially when their Reputation, their Livelihoods, and even their Lives are concern'd: An accused person ought to have his Enemy face to face, and hear his Inditement, and plead guilty or not guilty; but none of these things have yet been permitted to us: And if it be crime enough to be accused, no mortal Man hath his Innocency secured. These are, I hope, competent Reasons for this present Undertaking, it being a thing natural for a Man*

The Author's Protestation.

to defend himself, there being no living Creature so void of Sense, as not to avoid another that attempts to destroy him; and every Worm will turn upon him that would tread on it: And if an innocent person chance to injure another that injuriously assaults him, he is alway held guiltless, as having done it Se defendendo.

This, Sir, is what the irregular and groundless Proceedings of some Dissenters have exacted from us, to mollifie, if it be possible, the Temper of the People, as well as to abate the confident Calumnies of our Enemies. Which God of his infinite Mercy grant. I am, Sir,

Wholly yours, as you are

the Churehes Servant.

VOX

VOX CLERI:
OR THE
Sense of the Clergy,
CONCERNING
ALTERATIONS in the
Established LITURGY, &c.

S I R,

THE Intelligence you were pleased to give me of the Election of Dr. *Jane* to be Prolocutor of the Convocation, gives great satisfaction to the Clergy of these Parts; and that he was Chosen by much the major part of your Members, is lookt on as a good Omen of Success in your Proceedings for the good of the Church, as by Law established; He being generally known to be a Person extraordinarily well qualified, as well in respect of his Parts and Piety, as of Loyalty and Love to the Church. I have (as you desired) been very solicitous to inform my self concerning the Sentiments of the Clergy in my Neighbourhood, whether they think it convenient that there should be Alterations made in the Liturgy, Government and Discipline of the Church, or not: And although I find them very inclinable to part with several Ceremonies, and to submit to many Alterations for the peace of the

B

Church,

Church, and satisfaction of sober Dissenters; yet considering what weightier Matters the Dissenters seek to remove, they suppose it more advisable not to part with any thing to those that will not be satisfied, unless they may carry all: And for this Opinion of theirs, which they humbly submit to the more mature determination of the Convocation, they humbly offer the following Considerations:

1. They think it very reasonable, that such as are aggrieved should make their Application to the Convocation, to whom His Majesty hath given Power to prepare such Remedies as may by the Parliament receive the force of a Law; for so says the Commission; So that the things by you so considered and prepared may be in a readiness to be offered to the Convocation at their next meeting; and when approved by them, may be presented to us, and our Two Houses of Parliament; that if it shall be judged fit, they may be established in due form of Law. It cannot be expected that the several Sects should agree in Common Proposals, but that such of them as will be satisfied with what in Reason and Conscience may be granted, and then I should not doubt that they would be gratified, and a good agreement made; for all agree (according to our Subscriptions) that such Ceremonies as concern Discipline and Order, may, upon just causes, be altered and changed; but whether Alterations should be made when they are like to produce more hurt than good, is what we think worthy of consideration in the present case. And we think we have a Moral assurance, that whatever Concessions the Convocation can make with safety to themselves, will not only be despised, but cast back as filth in our faces; not only with a *Quis requisivit*, but with a *Pudet hæc Opprobria vobis*; as if our manner of publick Worship were so corrupt, that we were ashamed of it, and were convinced of a necessity to purge it. Whereas though it was declared in the Preface to the Liturgy, as also in the King's Ecclesi-

Ecclesiastical Commission, as is repeated p. 13. of that Discourse, *That it is reasonable that on weighty and important Considerations, according to the Exigency of times and occasions, such Changes and Alterations may be made, as to those that are in place of Authority should seem necessary or expedient*: Yet it is there said, *We are fully perswaded in our Judgments, that the Book, as it stood before established by Law, doth not contain in it any thing contrary to the Word of God, or to sound Doctrine, or which a godly Man may not with a good Conscience use and submit unto, or which is not fairly defensible against any that shall oppose the same.* Though the Book there spoken of hath been altered for the better in some Hundreds of places since that Declaration.

2. They think it reasonable, that the End should be considered, before the Means be resolved on. Now the End designed by the Alterations to be made, is the Satisfaction of the Consciences of the Dissenters, and reducing them to the Communion of the Church; but what those Alterations are that will give them satisfaction, hath not yet been proposed with any moderation, nor what Concessions will reduce them to our Communion. The Author of a Discourse concerning the late Ecclesiastical Commission, p. 18. saith, *That in the Year 1661, the Alterations and Additions then made by the Convocation, did amount to the number of about Six hundred*: Yet that Established Liturgy was rejected by some of the chiefest Dissenters (not without very indecent Reflections on King Charles the Second, who had promised to leave those things to the Parliament and Convocation) with this reproach, *If these be all the Abatements and Amendments ye will admit, ye sell your own Innocency, and the Churches Peace for nothing.* † In the Year 1681, when Dr. Stillingfleet, now Bishop of Worcester, made large Overtures to gratifie the Dissenters, (*viz.*) That the Cross in Baptism might be either taken off, or confin'd to publick Baptism, and left to the choice of the Parents: That such as could not Kneel

might be permitted to stand at the reception of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper : That the Surplice should be taken away : That at Baptism the Fathers should be permitted to joyn with the Sponsors in offering the Child to Baptism, or desire them publickly to present their Child, and the Charge be given to them both : That they should be required to Subscribe only to thirty six of the Articles : That there should be a new Translation of the Psalms for Parish-Churches : That the Apocryphal Lessons should be exchanged for Scriptural : That the Rubrick should be Corrected, with many other Condescensions. They were all thrown, as it were, with spite in his teeth, by those that Answered his Sermon and Proposals, with an *Habeat sibi & suis*. And in a Book of Mr. R. B's, lately Re-printed, being an Account of Non-conformity in the Reigns of *Charles* the Second and *James* the Second ; it is affirmed, That there are Forty sinful Particulars in our Communion, besides Thirty tremendous Principles and Circumstantials, which affright the Dissenters from it ; and he reproacheth the Conformists as a company of lying and perjur'd Persons. And the Author of a late Book, called the *Healing Attempt*, says, they (the Non-conformists) are not satisfied with the Propension of our Governors, to lay aside the Ceremonies, and other more offensive Impositions, unless their new Model for a Comprehension may be admitted ; which is such, as would make every Parish-Church independent, and in a short time turn our *Bethel* into a *Babel* of Confusion ; whereas therefore it is said in the Preface to the Liturgy, *It is reasonable, that on weighty and important Considerations, such Alterations may be made as to those that are in Authority should seem necessary and convenient* : Yet it is added in the same Preface, *We are fully perswaded in our Judgments (and we here profess it to the World, that the Book, as it stood before established by Law (and we may say the same of the Book now Established after the Six hundred Alterations) doth not contain in it any*

thing

thing contrary to the Word of God, or to sound Doctrine, or which a godly Man may not with a good Conscience use or submit unto, or which is not fairly defensible against any that shall oppose the same.

Now I take it as granted, that the Convocation neither can nor will alter all those Particulars which some leading Men among the Dissenters do account to be Sinful ; nor all those tremendous Circumstantials which will still fright them from our Communion ; and that if but a few, if but one such thing, which they account to be Sinful, remain unaltered, the Schism will still be continued : and therefore if I should ask, *Cui bono* ? To what end should any Alterations be made ? I doubt a satisfactory Answer could not be given by such as plead for them, when they themselves have so plainly declared, that they will not be satisfied.

Object. But herein we may please the King, the Parliament, and a great part of the Dissenting Laity.

Ans. First as to the King, His Majesty hath devolved that Province on the Convocation and Parliament.

2^{dly}, He hath declared his Satisfaction as to the present Constitution.

3. He doth confirm his declared Judgment by his constant practice in Communicating with the Church as established, and frequent Promises to favour and protect it.

2. As to the Parliament, they do generally live in the Communion of the Church ; and if any do otherwise, it is contrary to several Acts of preceding Parliaments, against which, though a Toleration be their Security, yet as that hath been formerly exploded, so it may be again, and if they see it fit, abrogated.

And 4^{bly}, Nothing can be obligatory but what shall be enacted by them whose consent we are not assured of.

3. As to the People, though some few may desire Alterations, yet they do not agree in what Alterations they will acquiesce : And it is more probable, that the insisting on a Conformity

Conformity to the present Constitution, will reduce all to an Uniformity, rather than any intended Alterations ; for Experience shews, that from the Year 1661, when Uniformity was enjoyed, the People were generally reduced to it ; so as in some great Cities scarce three or four persons of any note kept off from our Communion, until the Toleration (procured by the Papists) put all into Disorder again.

Lastly, What the late Commissioners have prepared in order to an Alteration, is to us a *Non constat*, the Reasons are best known to themselves ; but though we have no very good opinion of such of them as are said to be of *Latitudinarian* Principles, yet they having hitherto lived in a Conformity to the Church as established, we hope they will not give up any thing that is substantial, with the Circumstantial for Decency and Order ; or if they do so, it will be as pardonable in us of the Country, to forsake them, as for some of those eminent Divines, that were joyned in Commission with them : And I am fully perswaded, that on making such Alterations as are said to be prepared by the Commissioners, the Church will run the hazard of offending a greater number of more considerable persons, than they are likely to gratifie thereby.

Object. But such Alterations being made, such as shall thenceforward continue to be Dissenters, will be more inexcusable.

Ans. This is not very probable, because they will still say, you have only taken off the lesser Offences, but have continued the weightier Matters on their Consciences still, (*viz.*) such as in their Consciences they account to be Sinful, and their Conformity to them to be Damnable.

And if after such Alterations be established by Law, and any Penalty be annexed for the Sanction of that Law, the Legislators will be reflected on as Persecutors, and their Laws as to many tearing Engines : though I must needs say, there never yet were such severe Penalties enacted against any sort of Dissenters,

Dissenters, though known to be Men of Atheistical and Antimonarchical Principles, as against some Reverend Fathers and Members of the Church, who are known to be Men of Religious and Peaceable Principles, yet they quietly submit with a *Deus providebit*.

I may well presume, that no Man living in Communion with our Church, is convinc'd, that there is any thing Sinful in that Communion; now these being the greater and the better part, I say with Dr. *Beveredge* in his Sermon to the Convocation, p. 25. *Neque ratio neque perpetua Ecclesiae consuetudo patitur ut pars toti praeferatur*; Neither reason, nor the perpetual Custom of the Church, doth permit that a part should be preferred before the whole: And then nothing can justify the Dissenters from Schism in their Separation from us; for as to things that are by them judged Inexpedient, it is fit that the greater and better Part should judge of Expediency for the rest, and not they for themselves or their Betters: And if such Opinionative and Ungovernable People were for a while, by strict Discipline, taught the Duty of Self-denial, as to things in their nature indifferent, and how necessary Obedience to Superiours is in such cases, which even they themselves do practice, and in which sort of things only our Governours have Authority, we might hope for an Uniformity, and not otherwise: And to this end it is very observable what Dr. *Beveredge* says in his Sermon, p. 26. *Antiquas novis mutare Legibus*; To change old Laws for new, is alway dangerous, unless such a Necessity constrain as is otherwise insuperable.

There was never any Church which hath not inserted into her Laws many things (not contrary, but) beside those things which are in the Holy Scripture, and having made such Laws, do establish them by the Sanctions of Ecclesiastical Punishments, p. 23: When therefore that Learned Doctor says, p. 27. *Utum Ecclesiae nostra, &c.* whether our Church be obliged by a Necessity to change any thing that is
by

by her Laws established, is not his part to determine; but *Prudentis est*, and immediately adds, *This only I dare to affirm, That if it be necessary to reduce wandring Sheep into Christ's Flock; if to take off Scruples from the minds of weak Brethren; if to allay Hatred, appease Anger, and as much as may be, to suppress all Dissensions concerning Religion; if to recall Ecclesiastical Discipline to its Primitive Vigour; if to Defend and Establish the best Church in the World against the Assaults of Men and Devils; if these things (says he) seem necessary to any Man, it will also seem necessary to that Man to admit such Changes as he is perswaded will conduce to such ends; so as the Change be made in such things only which our Church hath constituted by her sole Authority, not in such as the Universal Church by her common Laws hath Established.*

Here then we say, that to alter the Episcopal Government, to take the Power of Ordination from Bishops, and place it in the hands of Presbyters, to take away a Well-ordered Liturgy, and bring in Extemporary Prayers for Publick Worship, to give every Minister a Jurisdiction and Power of Excommunication, and many other things, without which some grave Dissenters will not be comprehended, is more than the Learned Doctor will grant: for of such things he speaks his mind impartially, *Has sub quovis prætextu vel extremis digitis attingere, &c.* To endeavour the removal of these, under any pretence whatsoever, or to touch them with one of our Fingers, is contrary to the Religious Care of all the Churches of God, and of our own.

And to Abrogate or Reject that, which hath been everywhere, and at all times observed, is not to change an Ecclesiastical Rite only, but the Church itself, and to make it differ from all other Churches of God.

But what then is the Doctor's Judgment concerning such Constitutions as are in the Power of a particular Church:

Ans. This the Doctor determined, p. 23. *ut supra*, and again, p. 26. *A Change hath neither been wont, nor ought to be made by any Church at any time, unless some great Necessity do constrain thereto*: But of a change of what sort of Laws doth the Doctor speak? That he tells us in the same Page, *Neque enim quispiam, &c.* There is not any Man so skilful, as by any Art to foresee how many and great dangers are like to arise by the change of incommodious Laws; wherefore to change old Laws for new, is alway dangerous, unless such a necessity urge it as cannot otherwise be overcome; and such as is so manifest to all, that whoever seeth the Change, may also see, *Summam ejus rationem & necessitatem*, the greatest Reason and necessity for the Change even of those incommodious Laws.

To this I shall need to add no more than that apt Allusion of this Learned Doctor, concerning the Obligation of Ecclesiastical Laws, p. 19. *As in this Kingdom there are many Corporations and inferiour Societies which have a Power granted them, of constituting Laws for themselves and their Members, with this caution, That nothing be done or constituted by them which is contrary to the Statutes of the Realm, the Common Law, or any ancient Custom, which beyond the memory of Man, hath been introduced and received by the whole Kingdom, and thereby hath obtained the force of a Law*; (Now though this be in p. 20. applied to the Universal Church, yet in p. 21.) the Doctor applies it to particular Churches: *In quacunq; provincia sitae sunt*; In whatever Province a Church is planted, the Bishops and Pastors of that Province, may, as oft as occasion requires, hold their Synods or Sacred Assemblies to deliberate and consult of things belonging to the Church constituted in that Province: And p. 22. *All such Churches, by their Synods, have power to make Laws, as they shall judge expedient for the better Administration of the Publick Worship of God, and of his Word and Sacraments, within their Province*; otherwise it could not well be, that any Provincial or

National Church should long subsist, or be at peace. And p. 23. Moreover, it belongs to all the Churches of God, to establish, by Ecclesiastical Penalties, such Canons by them made, lest any thing contrary to them should be without Impunity committed.

Object. But our Divisions had almost betrayed us to Popery and Slavery, for prevention of which danger, for the future, it is adviseable, as much as may be, to enlarge the Terms of our Communion.

Ans. But who betrayed us to those Divisions? were they not such as causelessly separated from us, and were more ready to joyn with the common Enemy of the Protestant Religion, though they call'd themselves true Protestants, than with the Church of *England*? Whereof he that wrote the Defence of Dr. *Stillfleet's* Sermon of Separation, gave an Account, and even dared the Opponents to call him to the proof of it, (*viz.*) That Dr. *Owen*, &c. were entertain'd as Pensioners to the late King, and by him encouraged to continue our Divisions; by which the Papists got great advantages against us. And whereto tended the flattering and fulsome Addressses of the Sectaries to the late King, to stand by him with their Lives and Fortunes, and to obey him without Reserve, but to continue those Divisions, and foment those Seeds of Discord which were grown up, and ripen'd almost for the Harvest, to cut us all down, and utterly destroy us? And what if some leading Presbyterians be by our Alterations let into the Church, and advanced to such Preferments as they hope for; to be Bishops, Deans, Arch-deacons, &c. what security have we, that they will not promote Divisions in the Church, more dangerous, than the Schism they made by Separation from us; as some Bishops, and others that had been sour'd with that Leaven, being preferred in the Reign of *Charles* the Second, did attempt: A secret Enemy within the Walls of a well Fortified City, is more dangerous than an open Foe in the Field.

I have read in the Life of Judge *Hales*, written by the present Bishop of *Sarum*, p. 71. That there was a Bill for Comprehension contrived by Bishop *Wilkins*, Sir *Orlando Bridgman*, and that Judge, which though it contained more reasonable Terms than what are now proposed, (as I have been informed) for the Admission of some Dissenters into our Communion, yet it was opposed by the Clergy, because they thought a Faction within the Church, would prove to be more hurtful than a Schism without it: And when one Party was let in upon Terms not perhaps unreasonable, another Party, upon other Terms less reasonable, would sollicit their Admission. And it was objected, That as some might come in, so others, that were in our Communion, might take Offence by the Alterations, and desert it; and seeing our frequent Changes in some things, they might suppose that there is nothing certain among us; and from the many Disputes about our Liturgy, proceed to question our Articles, and at last fall off to the Church of *Rome*, which they saw more constant to their Principles: For which, and other reasons the Bill was cast out by the Votes of the House of Commons, with whom the same Considerations may still prevail.

And now let the Men that are given to Change, produce those weighty and important Reasons, required in the Preface to the Common-Prayer, or that great Necessity which *Dr. Beveredge* requires for the Alteration, even of incommodious Laws.

Is it necessary that an honest Man should voluntarily resign his Freehold to a litigious Person, who neither desires nor deserves it, and perhaps would improve the possession of it to his ruine?

Is it necessary that a Parent should yeild to a disobedient Child, upon his own unreasonable terms?

Is it necessary that a good Man should accuse, bear false witness against, and condemn and execute himself, and be a *Felo de se*?

Is it necessary that the Citizens should suffer a breach to be made in their Walls, to give advantage to an Enemy, when they are ready to open their Gates to let in any that offers a reasonable assurance that he is a Friend ?

Is there any necessity to Reform that Church which is confessed to be the best Reformed Church in the World ; that Church to whose Pattern all the rest do desire, and only want power and opportunity to conform their own ?

Is it necessary we should do more for those, who wilfully departed from us, and as our Saviour intimates, Not being content to be with us, were against us, than we have done for those forreign Protestants, Men of great Learning and tender Consciences, who voluntarily offer themselves to our Communion, without insisting on any Terms with us ?

Is it necessary that a Church in which all things necessary to Salvation, may be freely enjoyed, should accuse herself of want of Christian Charity, and of imposing such sinful Terms, for admitting others into her Communion, as were purposely designed to keep them out, and afterward voluntarily cast off those things, and thereby confess themselves guilty of so great Uncharitableness ?

Is it necessary that a Church, which hath Authority to judge for itself, what is decent and orderly, should subject herself to the Judgment of her Members, to determine for her or themselves, what is decent and expedient, and what is not ; especially when the Exception from Obedience to the Church in such things, ought to be as evident and unquestionable, as the Command to obey them in such Matters is ?

Is it necessary that we should give greater Offence to the Papists, from coming into our Communion (now in this juncture of time) by our Variableness and Defect of the Solemnity of Publick Worship, which hitherto they have objected against us ?

Is it necessary we should part with any thing to them, whom we have reason to suspect, that they will not leave craving till they have all?

When all these things are proved to be necessary, then shall we be ready to make Alterations in our Ceremonies, and other Circumstances, if the Dissenters will be content to let us enjoy what is substantial and necessary to the well-being of our Church: In the mean time we shall account ourselves Happy, in the number of those *English-men*, that know when they are well.

REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS ON A DISCOURSE CONCERNING The Ecclesiastical Commission.

S I R,

I Have also conferred with my Brethren concerning a Book intituled, *A Discourse concerning the Ecclesiastical Commission*, 1689. Of which we shall not say so much as the Author doth of a former Commission for the like affair, viz. *That he never entertain'd a good Opinion of it.* We only remark, that this Author hath laid the foundation, which he and some others have framed their superstructure on, viz.

1. *That the Alterations intended by it are not prejudicial.*
2. *That they are useful, tending to the well-being of the Church.*
3. *That it is a fit juncture for putting the design in execution.*

The Author gives several Instances of several Alterations made, as in the Third of *Edward the Sixth*, when the Common-Prayer-book was compos'd and altered, the 1st. of *Eliz.* And a Proclamation for Authorizing an Uniformity of the Book

Book of Common-Prayer ; and at the Return of *Charles* the Second, the Liturgy was reviewed (and altered) by his Commission at the *Savoy* ; but our Author takes no notice of the Penalties to be inflicted on such as should not conform to it, and on such as should defame it, by several Acts of Parliament ; nor how little effect it had for the healing the Divisions and Schism which some Dissenters had then made ; nor how much King *James* the First was displeased with those Dissenters, that pretended to make good their Objections against it, which they were not able to perform in the Conference at *Hampton-Court*, whereof the Author speaks, *p.* 3. Yet this I say of this Author, that he speaks much more modestly than the Author of *A Glance on the Ecclesiastical Commission*, who would precipitate the matter, and have an Act of Parliament for a Comprehension first, and then an Act to Authorize the Commission : But our Author pretends only to prepare things, thereby to save Time and Labour, in kindness to the Convocation ; whatever the Pretence be, the Consequence may be very prejudicial to the Members of the Convocation, if any difference should happen for this Discourte ; and several Letters being dispersed into the Countries, where they have their Residence, to prepossess the Minds of Dissenters, that they have occasioned the obstruction of the intended Union ; and as those Letters import, deserve to be treated as Enemies.

That Mobile which are already too full of Rankor against them, and have already, in a considerable City, burnt a Bishop instead of a Pope, will be ready to affront them, and throw them into the next fire, as they were, when there was rejoicing for the Bishops deliverance out of the *Tower* : And therefore it had been more prudent, if they had with patience expected the determination of the Convocation, and forbore those ill-boding Reflections, which tend to create an Odium against such Members ; though it be well known, they have no power to offer any thing, being limited by the King's Proposals.

Nor

Nor hath the Author consulted better for his own Party, when speaking of the Personal Qualifications of the Commissioners, *p.* 8. he tells the Country, how they have been traduced as assuming Men, who will think themselves bound in Honour to defend what they shall have done, as Men that have tenderness enough to part with any thing but their Church-preferments; As Men who have a Latitude to conform to a Church, *de facto*, which hath Power on its side. And *pag.* 9. Men who conceal their own inclinations, till it is time to shew them; Men likely to do the Church of *England* a good turn, when opportunity serves, and which perhaps they imagine now they have, which Characters agree well with those who are known to be *Latitudinarians* indeed, and have Monopolized Church-preferments. Yet our Author says they have no temptation now to shew, that they are Men of Latitude; it seems then they had heretofore. *Page* 10. our Author mentioneth another Objection, (*viz.*) That as it may happen, our Church may be changed, altered, and transformed by nine Men, which are the number of the *Quorum* in the Commission.

Now although I dare not say, there was any partiality used in naming the Commissioners; yet when I consider that many of those that were named did not appear, and some very considerable persons that did appear, perceiving that some such things, as might in their judgment prove prejudicial to the Church, were proposed, did dissent and withdraw; it was not altogether unlikely that Nine of those who remained might prepare such things, as the Convocation would not approve of, as the Event will shew.

And as for those great and excellent Men, who, as our Author says, are not named in the Commission; it had been a more commendable Office and Duty to have pleaded on their behalf, knowing them to be Men of great Prudence and Fortitude, as well as of Integrity and Affection to the Church; and that they are never like to disturb the Peace of the

the State, to intercede that some favour might be shewn to them as well as to Dissenters: Seeing if any, they are the Men, who suffer for sake of their Consciences; especially, seeing our Author says, *The Commissioners design nothing so unreasonable as to fear, that the Alterations would not pass in a free Convocation, if those Reverend and Judicious Prelates were present.* But it is our great unhappiness, that though there have been several Convocations called, yet had not an opportunity of meeting, till these Right Reverend Fathers and others were excluded and made incapable; what hinderance this may be to the performance of what they promised, (as our Author relates) *That they wanted no due tenderness to Dissenters, but were willing to come to such a temper as should be thought fit when that matter should be considered in Parliament and Convocation,* I cannot divine, but acquiesce in the judgment of our Author, That if nothing unreasonable were designed, it might then have passed, and a firm Establishment ensued; for doubtless the calm Tempers of those Reverend Fathers would mightily have influenced their Sons.

Page 13. mention is made of the Commission; the Preface whereof is the same with what hath been before mentioned out of the Preface to the Liturgy, concerning the Alteration of Rites and Ceremonies, &c. upon weighty and important Considerations; and the end of it is, to take away all occasions of differences for the future, as well as reconciling all Their Majesties Subjects at present. A Blessing! this to be seriously endeavoured by all persons, but rather to be hoped for than expected; for though not only all our Rites and Ceremonies, all things tending to Decency and Order, should be taken away, yet there will be some that will find occasions of difference still; for we are told in the late *Healing Attempt*, *That it is impossible for the Dissenters to unite, if it be still affirmed, That the Bishops and Presbyters are not of the same Order: That the Power of Ordination is the sole Prerogative of the Bishops: (i. e.)* If the Ordina-

nation by Presbyters be not as authentick, as that by Bishops; or that the Ordination by Presbyters is void; and that the Ordaining them again by Bishops, is not Re-ordination; and he tells us plainly, *That it is not the taking away of our Ceremonies, and other Impositions, that will satisfie the Dissenters; but if a Comprehension may not be had on these other terms, there can be none at all.* And a greater Dissenter than he says of Episcopacy, *That it is that thorny hedge which he had made his business to pull down, and would endeavour it (by going on both sides) as long as he lived.* And what dislike some have, not only of the pretended defects in our Liturgy, but to any Liturgy for publick Worship, is too well known by some very late Writings of the Dissenters. And Mr. Baxter affirms, *That of the Forty sinful Terms for a Communion with us, if Thirty-nine were taken away, and only that Rubrick concerning the Salvation of Infants, dying shortly after their Baptism were continued, yet they could not conform.*

Now to what purpose should we begin, when we cannot see where to end. Is it not better to endure some inconveniencies (as in all Constitutions some will be) than to expose our selves to certain mischiefs? And what can we expect when the Six hundred Alterations in 1661, had no competent effect, but were rejected with scorn? I wonder how this Author can object to you, as if you proceeded on the same false grounds, as those Papists *Heath* and *Fecknam* did in *Primo Eliz.* in opposing the Act for Uniformity, (*viz.*) *That those changes were departures from the Standard of the Catholick Church; That Points once defined, were not to be brought again into question; That the Church should be constant to it self;* For he cannot but know that they opposed the Act for Uniformity *Primo Eliz.* as excluding the false Doctrines and Superstitions of *Rome*; whereas we plead for the Preservation of Uniformity in Doctrine, Worship and Government; which are all opposed by some sort of Dissenters: I shall leave

leave the indifferent Reader to judge of the Inference which he makes, p. 18. *That if the Commissioners in 1661, saw reason for making Additions and Alterations to the number of Six hundred ; That there is equal, if not greater reason for some further improvements.* I think he might rather conclude, as he doth immediately after ; *That if they had foreseen what is since come to pass, (viz.) how few of the Dissenters came in upon those Condescensions) they would not have done all that they did.* And perhaps on these Concessions, in favour of Dissenters, the Papists had those hopes cherished in them (of which our Author there speaks) of Liberty of Conscience, the removal of the Sanguinary, and then of other Penal Laws, and of Forty Chappels to be opened for them in and about London ; for they know the Charity of the Church of England is not confined to one Sect, as that of the Sectaries is. What he says p. 19. *That the Conformists have given their Assent and Consent to the Book of Common-Prayer, whereof the Preface is a part ; which says, That in Churches Circumstantials may from time to time admit of Alteration,* is true, but not the whole truth ; for it is added, *Upon great and important Reasons,* which the Author omits ; and if he speaks it not, as being in a good Mood, but as his settled Judgment, that our Church, as it is the best constituted Church in the World ; then certainly they that cannot conform to our Church, must on the same reason dissent from all the other Reformed Churches. Page 20. he says, *He is, in part, of the Opinion that the Prayers cannot be altered for the better by any meer humane composition :* But he will not grant it of every Collect ; and what those Collects are, we may have occasion to consider hereafter ; it is enough, that our constant daily Prayers are beyond exception ; His great business (as he calls it) will be but a great burthen to the Dissenters, as well as himself, (viz.) *Adding some Offices to the Liturgy, and preparing new ones which are wanting.* Seeing we have had so many complaints of the length and tediousness of them

formerly, one thing the Author can scarce pardon himself for, when writing of those who he says so angrily, though causelessly, spake against that Work, *i. e.* of making Alterations ; he adds, *They must pardon me, if so near after the mentioning of them, I take notice of the French Papists, who have reviled both the Commission, and the persons named in it.* Herein he seems to joyn all such as are not for Alterations, with the Papists ; and whether they must pardon him for this, if the People deal with them as Papists, let him consider, and pardon himself if he can ; yet I think the Papists would very willingly have us make more Alterations, than most Protestants think fit to make.

It is a pretty insinuation which he makes, *p. 21.* *That the Conformists will naturally be glad if the House, in which they resolve to live and dye, have all the strength and beauty added to it, which can be given it by Commission, Convocation, and Parliament.*

Ans. The strength and beauty which it now hath, is by all those means confirmed to them ; and willingly they would live, and hope they may happily dye in it : But if the Dissenters will make breaches in that House, and take possession thereof, deface its Beauty, and undermine its Strength, and force them to leave it, I cannot see how they can naturally be glad of the behaviour of such ill-natur'd Men ; and that there are some such besides those whom I have mentioned already, the Author speaks of some in *Northamptonshire*, and I know such in other Counties, who oblige their Communicants, and have vowed themselves never to return to the Communion of the Church of *England* ; and if the present generation be so bad, the next is not like (if these Men have their desire) to be better.

In *p. 22.* the Author considers, *That now is a fit juncture of time for Alterations :* And his first ground is, *the Expediency, for things which may be done, yet are not to be done at a time when they are not expedient :* And thus he shews the
Expe-

Expediency ; *The Passions of Men at this time are in a vehement fermentation ; and he that would allay the Fever, may stay too long, if he forbears to prescribe till the blood is quiet.* But must the Mother be bled, if the Children be distempered ? Must the Passions of Men disturb the Peace of the Church, and no Man endeavour to suppress them ? If a sick Man be distempered, and ungovernable, the Physician is his friend, though he cause him to be confin'd or bound for a time.

2. *He says the Church hath at this time powerful Enemies.* Therefore I think she ought to stand on her guard, and keep strict watch, lest they that are so, make too near approaches. And none are more dangerous, than those that are or have been of the same House ; And though the Church had of late as implacable Enemies as ever, and they in great Power ; yet, by the blessing of God, she hath out-lived them.

Obj. 3. *Their Majesties have declared their desires of it.*

Ans. The Commission says, *Upon weighty and important Reasons ; and that the Alterations prepared by the Commissioners, may be approved by the Convocation and Parliament.* Cannot you wait for that time ?

2. Their Majesties desire may be best known by their living in the Communion of the Church as now established, and his former and late Declarations to favour and protect it ; for which the Convocation have addressed their Thanks, and doubt not of it.

4. *The House of Lords have given us their Sense of it in the Bill of Union.*

Ans. We must expect their Sense, nothing being as yet determined by them, as to new Alterations ; and the Act for Uniformity stands unrepealed by them.

5. *Toleration is already granted by Statute.*

Ans. That is a greater favour than was granted to the Church-party, in the late Wars, for almost Twenty years together, when Dissenters were in Power ; and that should suffice them which they accounted too much for others.

2. It is well known at whose instance, and for whose sake Tolerations were formerly granted, (*viz.*) of such as were professed Papists, and that under a false pretence, That the pressing of Uniformity had not procured the desired success; but the true Reason was, that it was too successful.

3. The Reasons given by a very Religious and Loyal Parliament against Toleration are irrefragable, which were passed *Nemine contradicente*, in the Parliament 1662, and may be seen in several Printed Tracts: This Parliament in the Act for Uniformity, did as much as was possible to perpetuate the Liturgy then Established, to future Generations, ordering all Deans and Chapters to procure Copies of it under the Great Seal, and perfect Copies of the Act of Uniformity; and the like were to be kept in the Courts of *Westminster*, and in the Tower of *London*, that by them, any Error committed by the Printer might be rectified.

4. *The Eyes of the World are upon us, and all the Reformed Churches are in expectation of something to be done, which may make for Union and Peace.*

Answ. The Eyes of the Christian World admire, as well the Holiness of our Doctrine, as the Beauty of our Worship and Administration; as also, the great things that God hath done for our Church to preserve it, as hitherto, (blessed be his Name) he hath graciously done against all the violent Attempts of Popish Fury, and Fanatick Zeal. And as for the great Numbers of *Irish* and *French* Protestants, which are now among us, if we consult them, they will all acknowledge the great Goodness of God, in preserving our Church to be a Sanctuary unto them, from the Rage of their Persecutors; and heartily joyn with us in all our Ordinances, without any scruple against either our Doctrine or Ceremonies. And this gives us much ease under our domestick Troubles, and hopes that it will be a benefit to us, if well considered by them that are otherwise minded.

No Man can be wise too late, (saith our Author) pag. 24.
Bu

But it's too late to shut the Stable-door, when the Steed is stollén : *Principiis obsta*, is a wise Rule. Page 25. After the Year 1661, though there were Writs issued out for a Convocation, yet no Warrant could be procured for the Support and Encouragement of the Church, during the Reigns of Charles the Second, and James the Second.

Ans. The reason was, because the Dissenters of all sorts feared what would be done in the Case of Toleration and Indulgence, as now they do in the Case of Comprehension, and therefore the Meeting was delayed. And he thinks it no good Advice of them that say, Do nothing now, or as little as may be : when little or much is not the business ; but as much as is fit, he should have said, *Upon great and important Reasons*. He adds, *If one Opportunity be neglected, it may discourage the Powers that offer it, from vouchsafing another.*

Ans. We have heard indeed, That if the intended Alterations be not made by the Convocation, it may be done without them in time. If so, it will be their comfort, that they did not put their Hands to the pulling down the Church upon their own Heads. In the mean time, we of the Country are much amused to hear of your tedious Adjournments, and know not what to guess at, as the occasion of those delays ; unless it be, to give the Dissenters time to spread abroad scandalous Reports of such of the Convocation that carried the Election of Dr. *Jane* to be Prolocutor, against those who Voted for Dean *Tillotson* ; who, as we have heard, claimed it as his Right, belonging to that Deanery ; though we have been since informed, that there belongs to that Deanery only *Jus dirigendi Electionem* ; which implies, That the Convocation had the Power and Right of Election ; and that Dr. *Tillotson* was not then confirmed in that Deanery ; but that the Election was carried only by three or four Voices, and given up by Dr. *Tillotson's* Party to prevent any disturbance : But you have assured us, that it was otherwise, there being Two to One who Voted for Dr. *Jane*. And now that

that we see Letter after Letter sent abroad, to cast an Odium on such as shall not Vote for Alterations, though they see not any sufficient cause so to do, but great and important Reasons for the contrary, we think that we see the reason of your Adjournments, which have given a Month's time to others, to prepare and disperse such Pamphlets as may tend to your prejudice, and prepossess the People, that you are the Enemies of Peace and Reconciliation; and to this end he complains: First, (as the usual Practice is) of those Churchmen, who by means of any Letters or Pamphlets, containing uncharitable Misrepresentations of the Commissioners, or the Work under their hands, are prejudiced against them; for he condemns such as Enemies to Peace, and as having a Zeal not according to Knowledge: but neither this Author, nor any other, since the first meeting of the Convocation, have taken any care to prevent the prejudices that some have endeavoured to raise against the far greatest part of them, for choosing Dr. *Jane*, rather than Dean *Tillotson*; and whereas we have not yet seen one Pamphlet, or Printed Letter to persuade us, that there is no necessity of Alterations, we have very many, that not without great Zeal, would incline us to think them necessary. And this Work being done by way of preparation, our hope is, that the Convocation will meet with no more Adjournments, but closely apply themselves to what shall be proposed by their Majesties, and give the Nation the Result of their Consultations, and the Reasons of them: And so I joyn with the Author, earnestly beseeching the People, not to give too open an Ear to any such Censures of Things, which they do not yet fully understand, and which for ought they know, may prove a great Blessing to them.

The next Paper whereof I shall give you my thoughts, is, *A Letter from a Minister in the Country, to a Member of the Convocation*: The Author needed not have told us, that he was a Country-Minister; for though there be in the Country

try many Ministers, who for their Learning, may be, without disparagement, compared with most of the City-Ministers; yet the Matter of his Letter, as it is penned, shews, that he is inferiour to many of our Country-Ministers, as will evidently appear, by his handling the particulars which deserves any remark: He begins with what, he understands, will be first offered to the Convocation, (to wit) *The Reformation of the Kalender*; where he would have the Apocryphal Lessons exchanged, for as many taken out of the Canon of Scripture, as by the Bishops and other Divines Assembled to consider of that matter, 1641: He doth not say was agreed; for I find in an Answer to a Petition presented to the King's Majesty, by above a Thousand Ministers, as it was there said, that there was no such concession made; for pag. 14. the Answer to the Objection says, *That they are grossly ignorant if they know it not, or wilfully malicious and turbulent, if knowing it to be lawful, they yet oppugne the Reading of the Apocryphal Writings in the Church; Non ad confirmationem fidei sed ad reformationem morum*: As the Ancient Fathers speak and approve; for which they quote *Hier. Preface in Pro. Cyprian in Symb.* in whose days, it seems, they were so read. And they add, That the Articles of Convocation, and the Preface before the Apocryphal Books in the *English Bibles*, do directly shew; adding, that they give light to the Divine History. And in the Account given of the Proceedings of the Commissioners, Printed 1661, where the same Objection was made, p. 55. and the reason given for it: *Because the Scriptures contain all things necessary, either in Doctrine to be believed, or in Duty to be practised*: They answer, *That such a Reason would exclude all Sermons, as well as Apocrypha; And why then so many Sermons, if notwithstanding the sufficiency of Scripture, Sermons be necessary? There is no reason why these Apocryphal Lessons should not be useful, most of them containing excellent Discourses, and Rules of Morality: It is heartily to be wished, that Sermons were as good; and to leave*

them out, were to cross the Practice of the Church in former Ages. And the Reply of the Dissenters at that time is observable: *We asked not, say they, that no Apocryphal Chapter may be read in the Church; but, that none may be read as Lessons.* If you cite the Apocrypha as you do other Humane Writings, or read them as Homilies, we speak not against it; and of this, neither those Dissenters, nor any ordinary Country-Minister could be ignorant; the Church having declared, That they are not of equal Authority with the Scriptures; which is known to their own People, who therefore will not have them Bound with their Bibles; besides, no part of the Apocrypha is read on *Sundays*, but on the Week-days, when there are too few to hear them, and those few better instructed than to think them Canonial. But though this may satisfy all sober persons, yet I do here protest, That were it not that the Dissenters have given us an assurance, that tho' these and many other Alterations should be made, it would give them no satisfaction, nor bring them into our Communion, I would use all the Interest I have for such Alterations; and for that end also, part with many of the Ceremonies; but of this there is a deep silence, or rather a loud dissent.

The Letter adds, *If those Apocryphal Chapters were anciently read, so were Hermes Pastor, and Clemens Rom. and the Argument holds for reading these.*

Ans. The Church have anciently disused them; but if they were now read, or the Epistles of *Ignatius* and *Polycarp*, or some select Chapters out of King *Charles* the Martyr's ΕΙΧΟΝ ΡΑΤΗΛΙΧΗ, instead of the Sermons on the Week-days *Lectures*; in which many greater Absurdities tending to Schism and Sedition are injected into the minds of the People; I believe, it would be much more for the Edification of them.

Object. *If they, (i. e.) the Apocryphal Lectures, were read, then we know what Mischiefs ensued from it, &c.*

Ans. We know too, what Mischiefs accidentally arose from

from Reading the Scriptures ; must they therefore be laid aside ? *But the Church of Rome hath made them Canonical.*

Answ. The People do believe, that many of those false Doctrines, many Fallhoods, and dangerous Opinions, which are held forth to them in their Conventicles, are as true as the Gospel ; and why are not they laid aside ? when we know what Mischiefs some Sermons Preached in 41, and 42 produced : *Bell and the Dragon*, with *Tobit and his Dog* could not have done such dismal feats. The next thing insisted on, p. 6. is, *The Revising of the Psalter, added to the Liturgy, which seems not so defensible, there being a more Correct Copy in our Hands ; and an inconsistency between the two Translations being observed by the Vulgar.*

Answ. Though there be Variations in the two Translations, yet they do not contradict one the other ; but rather explain and give light to each other ; as the divers Commentaries of Learned Men do.

2. The Translation of the Liturgy-Psalter is taken mostly from the Septuagint, or *Greek Copies*, which that Church still observes ; and it is observable, that our Saviour and the Apostles, when they quote the Scripture of the Old Testament, to confirm their Doctrine, do frequently make use of this Translation, though the *Hebrew* was as well known to them as the *Greek*.

3. There are *Variae Lectiones* even in the *Hebrew Copies*, which the want of Points hath occasioned ; concerning which there are yet great Disputes among the Learned Criticks.

4. The best Translations have many Defects and Inconsistencies, occasioned by the various Significations of the *Hebrew* words ; as the word *Barach* signifies both to Bless and to Curse : So that though the one should be granted to be more correct than the other, yet because the one serves as a short Paraphrase to explain the other, and the People have the Use of both, this Exception is a meer Cavil : And there is some weight in what the Letter observes, *That the People have ma-*

ny of them learnt the Psalms, as they are daily read Memoritur, which if disused, they would soon forget. And for this cause our Saviour made use of the Septuagint Translation, because it was best known to that Generation. And if the Septuagint Translation needs a Review, so doth the other, which is not so Correct, but it may be amended in many places, and so will the best, to the end of the World. That the Author of the Letter may let nothing pass, he omits not the Use of the Ring in Marriage; tho' he says, *It is agreed to be but a Civil Right*: And therefore I leave him to be civilly treated by the Women.

Page 8. The Letter comes to treat of our Ceremonies; concerning which he says, *There is a difficulty to proceed in our Dissentions; for without quitting or altering, the Dissenting Party is not to be brought into the Church*; and without retaining them, many of our own will hardly be kept in it: And he considers, *That the one may occasion a Schism from the Church, the other a Schism in it*. Now a Schism in the Church, will tend more certainly and speedily to its Confusion, than that out of the Church. And this Schism is already in being, and will not be remedied, tho' all the Ceremonies should be taken away; it is therefore very imprudent, causelessly to begin another Schism in the Church, especially when it is not so much Conscience, as Scruple and Prejudice, on which the Dissenters dislike our Ceremonies; for when for their Interest, and enjoyment of beneficial Offices, they were required to conform to the Publick Worship, they did it, notwithstanding the Use of Ceremonies; and I know few of them who are not willing that their Children and Relations should conform for their advantage; and therefore I shall not trouble the Reader with his impracticable Ideas for Accommodation; and only say, That more than what he proposeth hath been offered for an Accommodation, but refused, and that not without Cause.

Page 9. He comes to the business of Reordination, and says, *They*

They that have been Ordained by Presbyters (though they are not against Episcopal Orders, yet) think it unlawful to renounce them, and to be Reordained.

Answ. This he confesseth to be against a late Act of Parliament yet in force, which hath provided, *That none are to be admitted to Officiate in the Church of England, without Episcopal Ordination*: for which reason, if there were no other, I cannot see how any Member of the Convocation can consent to it: The first Reason which the Letter gives for it, is, *That it was not so before.*

Answ. It was ever so in the Church of *England*, except in some extraordinary Cases, where Ordination by Bishops could not be had; as in the Case of the three *Scottish* Bishops: but here the Case is altered, there being Bishops ready to give Orders, ever since 1660; wherefore such as have been Ordained by Presbyters since that time, may be said to do it in Contempt of their Authority in that Case; nor were those that were Ordained before that time deprived of an opportunity to take their Orders from the Hands of a Bishop, there being some still ready to confer them; and many in the preceding Years did accept of those Orders from Bishops; which argues, that such as did not refuse it in Contempt, or for their Preferment, which was denyed to some, because they had been Episcopally Ordained; but the main Argument may be taken from Dr. *Beveridge's* Text, 1 Cor. 11. 16. *If any Man seem to be contentious, we have no such Custom, neither the Churches of God*: for search all the Ecclesiastical Records, and you will find, that, except in case of great necessity, no Ordination hath ever been accounted valid, but such as hath been administered by the Hands of a Bishop; and if any did contest it, they have been branded as contentious Persons.

This Country-Minister therefore assumes too much to himself, to prescribe to the Convocation in so material a Point, and urge Arguments for it, when the Commissioners were only to prepare Materials for the Convocation to determine.

termine of. But he pleads farther, *p. 10. Quod fieri non debuit factum valet: Though it ought not to be done, yet being done, it is valid.*

This is denied, because both those Presbyters that gave it, and those who received it, were guilty of a Schism, as much then as now (for the Practice is still continued) Episcopal Ordination, being still to be had without any considerable difficulty. And the Author grants, that St. *Hierome*, (tho' pleading the Cause of Presbyters against Bishops, yet) grants, that it was the sole Prerogative and distinguishing Character of that Order (*viz.*) of Bishops to Ordain: His words are, *Quid enim non faciat Presbyter, quod facit Episcopus excepta Sola Ordinatione*: And therefore the *Salvo's* which he makes for the sake of some particular persons, against the constant practice of the Universal Church, and particularly against the Law of the Land, cannot be excused from being a Plea for the present Schism; and the perpetuating thereof, such Ordinations being still practised.

Page 12. He speaks concerning Declarations and Subscriptions: the result whereof is, That he perswades himself, (and I think he will not perswade many others, besides those who already stand out) that what is generally understood by those Subscriptions and Declarations, ought to be more plainly expressed: For if it be generally so understood already, as he would have it, what need is there to have it more plainly expressed? (*viz.*) That the former, *i. e.* the Declaration of Assent and Consent is to the *Use* of the Common-Prayer; the latter (*viz.*) Subscription to the Articles, is as to Articles of Peace and Concord, which, he says, is the Sense of Archbishop *Laud*, as he understands it (against *Fisher, p. 51. n. 2.*) And without doubt that of Archbishop *Bramhall* (Schism guarded, *S. 1. C. 11, &c.* and Mr. *Chillingworth's* Answer to *Charity Maintained.*) But yet, to maintain Schism and Contention, he forms a Case after this manner: *Suppose a young Student (not a Dissenter) thinks of entering into Holy Orders;*

Orders ; and considering what he is to do, meets first with the Declaration of his unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all and every thing contained in and prescribed by the Book of Common-Prayer ; among which, he finds that the Apocrypha is to be read. (Of this Scruple we have spoken already.) Then he proceeds to the Psalms, and comparing the two Translations, finds some things inconsistent, and sometimes the one to deny what the other affirms.

Ans. And this Case hath been already scanned ; but to omit nothing of his Objections, he adds, *That this young Man finds in the two Translations, some things inconsistent, and the one to deny what the other affirms ; and being to use both, in the Desk, he reads, (as Psal. 105. 28.) They were not obedient to his word ; and in the Pulpit, with the Hebrew, and the new Translations, he reads, They rebelled not against his word.* To this I answer :

First, There are many seeming Inconsistencies and Contradictions in that which he calls the Correct Translation, (namely, from the *Hebrew*) which have occasioned the writing of divers Books, for the reconciling of them ; and none but such as are disposed to Atheism, are offended at them.

2dly, This is such a Blunder, as none but a Man wholly given to Contention, and is able to read the Resolutions of Learned Men, could be guilty of ; had he consulted but Mr. P.'s *Synopsis* on the place, that the words *Lo Maru* admits of an Interrogation, and that is a vehement affirmation, then the sense of this Translation, *Did they not rebel ?* is as much as they *did rebel* against his word, which is the same with the other Translation, (*viz.*) *They were not obedient, or they rebelled against his word ;* thus the Hebrew Translation agrees with the Septuagint : And of this among other instances, Mr. Poole gives one, *Exod. 8. 26.* we read, *will they not stone us ?* when without the Interrogation, it would have been translated, *They would not have stoned us ;* but the Septuagint al-

so agrees well with the Hebrew Translation, for the Verb plural may have respect to divers precedent Nouns, some whereof speak *de rebus & signis*, others *de personis*; Now the *Egyptians*, for the conviction of whom God executed the Plagues before spoken of, were not obedient to his word, and so both Translations agree: These and other Resolutions are so clear, that I wonder how any Country-Minister, much less one of the City, should at this time of the day, be ignorant of them; but none so blind as he that will not see; for it looks like a design in the Author, to foment Prejudices and Mistakes in the Minds of young Men, to keep up a Schism against the Church. And so doth his next *Plea*, p. 14. against the use of the *Athanasian Creed*, whilst he restrains the Dam-natory Sentences to one Article of the Creed, which is to be referred to the whole, for so says the Preface, *This is the Catholick Faith*, &c.

Moreover, I think it not necessary to Salvation, that every Man should believe that Article of the Procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father to the Son, seeing there are several Articles in the Creed called the Apostles, as we receive it now, which in the most Primitive Times, were not extant in that Creed; for which consult *Vossius*, *Armagh*, and *Dr. Pearson*, the late Bishop of *Chester*; and therefore I cannot conceive that those Greek Churches were Hereticks, and in a state of Damnation, that held not the *Filioque*: And to this purpose the Letter makes his second Quere, *Whether this be a fundamental Article of the Faith, which except a Man believes he cannot be saved?* Seeing as he grants it is not made necessary by *Athanasius* himself, nor was originally either in the *Nicene* (truly so called,) or *Athanasian Creed*; Nor is it so thought by our Church, (says the Letter) which receiving the four first General Councils, agrees with that of *Ephesus*, (which is the third) which made a peremptory Decree against all Additions to be made thereafter to the Creed, *Concil. Ephes. Part 3. Art. 6.* (Which shews that some Additions had been formerly

formerly made,) *From whence* (says he) *it follows, that nothing else was then accounted necessary to be believed, but what was contained in the Nicene*: And so the Damnatory Sentences not appearing to be the Addition of *Athanasius*, nor respecting any particular Article, but what is fundamental and necessary to Salvation; in the whole, the young Man, notwithstanding any thing that the Letter saith, may Subscribe the *Athanasian Creed* with the Damnatory Sentences, which are applicable only to such as obstinately deny the Fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith contained in that Creed. And I desire the Author of this Objection to consider, what occasion it hath given to the *Antitrinitarians* to proclaim their Blasphemies against the Blessed Trinity, and consequently against the Christian Religion; for a late Writer says, *That Athanasius was drunk when he wrote that Creed; That it is settled by a Tyrannical Dominion, and is a Superstition or Polity, rather than true Religion; That the Follies and Contradictions charged on the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, are neither for Number, Consequence or Greatness, comparable to those implied in the Athanasian Creed; And that the Trinity hath the same foundation with Transubstantiation, and we must admit both or neither.* This Opinion of the *Socinians* hath been so confuted by our late Divines, that I shall not repeat their Arguments; so apt are our Adversaries, of all sorts, to improve the Objections of Dissenters into very dangerous and destructive Errors.

Page 15, This Country-Minister hath a very modest Request in behalf of himself and the Dissenters, *viz. That Presbytery may be restored to its ancient Priviledge, and permitted to share in all Acts belonging to their Station.* What Acts those are, he sufficiently intimates, but doth not enumerate; they must share in the Jurisdiction and Administration of Discipline; in the issuing forth of Excommunications, and in the power of Conferring Orders; and this, forsooth, for the honour of the Bishops to take off whatever they may suffer

by Misgovernment; and I suppose they would quickly draw too much of that Odium upon themselves: Wherefore as he doth, so shall I leave these things to the mature consideration of the Convocation; and how likely it is that the Church would not be the worse for these Alterations.

But concerning this, he raiseth two Objections: the first is, *Where are they that would come in upon these Concessions and Alterations?* And, 2^{dly}, if they do come in, what advantage this will be to the Church? To the first he says, 'tis but to try; and I say, whatever the Church can grant, and not be the worse for it, hath been already tried, and scornfully rejected, though the Concessions were more than the Convocation can now with prudence and safety grant them; for these will not stifle their clamours against the Church, who have publickly declared, that they expect greater things: *But in justice and integrity*, says the Letter, *these things ought to be granted; for it was promised by their Bishops, (viz.) that they wanted not due tenderness towards Dissenters, but were willing to come to such a temper as should be thought fit when that matter should be considered and settled in Parliament and Convocation.* But as he says they promised it when it was not in their power, and now (the more is the pity) it is not in their power to perform it; but they promised no more than was fit to be granted (*i. e.*) upon great and important Reasons, nor more than what should be thought fit by a Parliament and Convocation, to which it is still referred.

2^{dly}, He inquires what benefit this will be to the Church? To which I answer, None at all; if, as he says, when kept out they are Enemies, and when let in they will be no Friends: but when they have more power and opportunity, they may do more mischief. *S. M. E. C. T. T. M. N. W. S.* were in the Church in 1641, and did it more hurt than those that were kept out; and there are still such among us, as are not of us, whose Names would make up as terrible a word, as that of *Smectymnus*; but I forbear to call Names.

His third General is, *That there are such things in our Church, as may be altered for the better.*

Ans. Thus some Men have attempted to mend the Magnificat; but finding they could not do that, they resolved to lay it aside: And many an unskilful Architect hath undertaken to repair a good old Fabrick, and make it better; but by pulling down Beam after Beam, and after a lesser Stone a greater, till the whole Fabrick hath been like to fall; and then (what perhaps was designed at first) he perswades the Owners, that there is a necessity wholly to destroy the old, and erect a new one upon better foundations: And thus the Country-Minister thinks he hath cleared the Point, and may come in for a share in the imployment and benefit. And first he engageth to make easie and short work of it, and would not have his Country-Brethren to be obliged to their daily labour in the Service of the Church, but to be left free to attend it how and when they please, to perform one part of the Service at one time, and another at another, and to be left to their own discretion, and not tied up to Forms, and to do what is commanded them. Thus he pleads for himself and fellow-labourers, whom he thinks fit to share with the Master-builders; and to that end he thus misrepresents them, p. 20. *That they are ready to impose such burthens on others, as they will not touch with themselves; That they only walk from a warm House to a Cathedral, and for half an hour turn over a Service-book, hear a Sermon, and return to a warm Room and good Fare, and know not what it is to do the Service of a Cure perhaps all their life.* This would be very edifying Doctrine in a Conventicle, but not so acceptable, when a Country-Minister shall preach it to a Convocation, which consists of the select Clergy of the Land, who are, for the most part, obliged to the Service of God in Cathedrals, or in their own Churches; and moreover, to all those Services which the Country-Minister is bound to do: And which is as difficult a work, as any of the other, to Oversee those

Labourers, least they do more hurt than good by their Idleness, Ignorance, or Immorality ; for too many such there be, who, if they were kept to their daily duty, might be restrained from many inconveniencies, which are more prejudicial to their Lives, than the appointed Service of God would be. And doubtless the Convocation will not be of the Country-Minister's mind, *p. 21. That he should be left to his discretion to read one part of the Service one day, and another another ; and in the Afternoon to leave out the first Lesson, or the like ; leaving out on Sunday the Communion-Service, and shortning the Liturgy at the Lord's-Prayer.* For which he gives this reason, *That it was composed peculiarly with respect to a State of Persecution :* For which cause it ought rather to be continued ; for he asks the Question, *p. 27. Are we without danger ? and if not, have we less danger to fear now, when we are divided, than when united ?* But why must the Communion-Service be left out, when the Primitive Church did communicate at their daily Assemblies ? And it is the People's fault that the Communion is not Administred every Sunday in the Parish-Churches, as well as in the Cathedrals ; so that the reading that Service minds the People of their backwardness to partake of so great a Blessing, and both minds and prepares them for it.

But I see not to what end these Offices should be shortned, except it be to yield to the Country-Minister's extemporary Prayers, and tedious Sermons ; which if left to his discretion, would doubtless be the consequence. And his desire, *That the first Lesson, or the like, may be left out in the Afternoon, that Men may fodder their Cattel ; when, I suppose, the turning of the Afternoons Sermon into Catechizing, may better answer that end, and be more profitable to the People, both young and old ; and it is more agreeable to Order ; and this course would neither hamper their Consciences, nor expose them to the rash Censures of those whom he calls their not over-laborious Brethren :* Which Epithet some such Country-Ministers as himself

self may deserve ; p. 19. he would have *some of the Convocation sent down to some Country-Parishes, to ease the poor Ministers, by reading Prayers and Preaching, &c.* As if the Members of the Convocation never did perform the intire Service of the Church in Praying and Preaching.

The Country-Minister might consider, that a great part of them have travelled, some a hundred, some near two hundred Miles, to meet in Convocation, to consult for the common benefit of the Clergy, and sit sometime near the whole day in a cold place, in the depth of Winter : And some Country-Ministers, now of the Convocation, do now see in what great ease and plenty the City-Ministers live, who have their Readers and Lecturers, and frequent Supplies, and sometimes tarry in the Vestry till Prayers be ended, and have great Dignities in the Church, besides their rich Parishes in the City.

Having pleaded for the shortning of the Liturgy, he pleads, p. 22. for the prolonging of it, by adding an Office to receive Penitents after an Apostacy, and in case of notorious Scandal : this may concern the Country-Minister. 2. For receiving persons Absolved after Excommunication : this, as he desires, is left to the discretion of the Priest that Officiates. 3. An Office for the Prisoners, which is provided for by the Bishops, who generally appoint able Men for that charitable Office. So that all this notwithstanding, he concludes in the words of Dr. Featly, &c. concerning the Liturgy, as it stood before the 600 Amendments in 1661. *That the Book of Common-Prayer is the most compleat, perfect and exact Liturgy in the Christian World, and such as a Godly Man may with a good Conscience use, and not only lawfully, but comfortably joy in.* Wherefore it having already received so many Amendments, there should be some important Reasons given why it should admit of more, for his May-be's are no Arguments : It may-be some things are obscure, and too doubtfully exprest'd ; It may be in its Phraseology liable to misapplication ; It may be too fanciful : And all these May-be's,
may

may not be, if the most exceptionable Expressions in the whole Liturgy be allowed (as the Preface to it says) such just and favourable construction, as in common equity ought to be allowed to all humane Writings.

Page 23. Our Author comes to enquire more nicely into it, but whether more wisely let the Reader judge: He instanceth first in what he thinks obscure: As in the Prayer for the Clergy: *Who alone workest great Marvels, send down, &c.* of which, Who dares deny, saith Dr. Comber, that the assistance granted to the Ministers for the conversion of sinners are as marvellous, as was the Creation of Light out of Darkness or the Resurrection from the Dead: see *Ephes. i. 19.* So in the Collect for *Trinity Sunday*, *Who hath given us Grace in the Power of the Divine Majesty, to Worship the Unity.* This is not obscure to any that acknowledgeth the Trinity, which is to be worshipped in the Unity of Divine Majesty: As when in the Litany we pray, *O holy blessed and glorious Trinity, three Persons and one God.*

In the Preface at the Communion for *Trinity Sunday*, that which we believe of the Glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Glory of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality, (*viz.*) as to the Godhead, Christ having said, *I and my Father are one:* And the Church in all Ages hath professed the same belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and ascribes the same Glory to each of them in the *Tresagion.*

In the Prayer before the Communion: *That our sinful Bodies may be made clean by his Body, and our Souls washed through his most precious Blood:* (*i.e.*) that both our Souls and Bodies may receive all the benefits of his Death and Passion.

In the Office of Baptism: *By the Baptism of thy well-beloved Son in the River Jordan, didst sanctify Water:* (*i.e.*) didst appoint and consecrate the Element of Water, to be the outward sign of the Grace conferred in that Sacrament by the Blood and Merits of Christ. In the Office of Matrimony:

With

With my Body I thee Worship : Which signifies a civil Respect and Honour, and is more significant than what they would exchange it for, (*viz.*) I give thee Power over my Body. In that of Burial : *Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to take to himself, &c.* By which no more is meant, than what, as some understand, the Scripture says : *The Spirit returns to God that gave it* : or if it supposeth Discipline ; so it expresseth Charity, where Discipline hath not excluded them from the Communion of the Church, that we hope they rest with God. So in the Collect for *Easter-Sunday*, where the Preface and the Petition want a better Connexion : The Preface and Connexion are thus : *That as God by Christ hath opened to us the Gate of everlasting Life, so he would (prepare us for that life) putting into our Hearts good Desires, by his special Grace preventing us, and by his continual help we may bring the same to good effect.* So the first Sunday after *Easter, &c.* the Preface is, *Almighty God who hast given thy only Son to die for our Sins, and to rise for our Justification* : The Connexion is : *Grant us so to die unto sin, (which is the sense of) to put away the leaven of Malice, that we may serve thee in pureness of living and truth, (i. e.) we may live unto God.* 2. He instanteth in some things liable to misapplication ; as in the Visitation of the Sick : *By his Authority committed to me, I absolve thee ; which the Priest having prayed God to do, he applyeth in Nomine domini, in the Name of the Father, &c.* By the Authority committed to me as God's Minister, I absolve thee, Jo. 20. 23. And the Answer in the Catechism : *The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the Faithful in the Lord's Supper : (i. e.) in a spiritual, but real manner by the faithful Communicants ; for there is sufficient caution given against the Doctrine of Transubstantiation.* So in the Exhortation for warning of the Communion : *Because it is requisite no Man should come to the Holy Communion, but with a full trust in God's Mercy, and with a quiet Conscience* : For if St. Paul says, we may not partake

of common things with a doubting Conscience, *Rom. 14. 5.* much less of spiritual: And when Men consult the Lawyers for their Estates, and Physicians for their Bodies, why should they not consult the Ministers for their Souls? Such again are those Collects which too much incline to the *Pelagian* Phrase, laying the force of temptation, and Man's liableness to sin, upon the frailty, and not the corruption of our Nature; as the first and 24th *Sunday* after *Trinity*: what they mean by frailty, that first Collect explains, to be such, as that without God we can do no good thing, which is the great corruption of our Nature; and no Doctrine concerning the corruption of Nature is more plain, than that in our Articles. *Lastly*, Some Collects, he says, are too fanciful, and savour of the *Breviary*, as those of *St. Luke, St. John, Simon and Jude*.

Ans. Whatever in the *Breviaries* are taken out of the Scripture, or Authentick and Ancient Ecclesiastical History, is not therefore to be rejected; and that *St. Luke* was that beloved Physician mentioned *Col. 4. 14.* is the constant assertion of all Interpreters, and the express words of the Scripture; therefore no Legend. Of these he says, *That in a sort they need amendment*: And so doth the Judgment of this nice Enquirer, who, I fear, hath lost his *Rationale*, which he might easily supply from *Dr. Comber's*, or *Bishop Sparrow's* Discourses. A Man would think this Writer to have been hired to betray the Cause of the Dissenters, by his weak and impertinent Arguments for its defence: and a great conviction it will be to many, that there need no Alterations to be made, when their prime Advocate insists on such Instances as render him vain and ridiculous. Many things he would add to the Office of Confirmation: *viz.* An Exhortation on the *Sunday* before, and a Discourse about the Nature, Use, and Obligation of it; and a serious Exhortation after it, with some Inlargements of the Collects; by all which he provides to bring down the Bishops to more labour than he would have any Country-Minister to perform, considering what other Offices

Offices they usually perform at the same time (*viz.*) Administration of the Holy Sacraments, Ordination of Priests and Deacons, &c.

It were easie, saith our Author, to be copious on this Argument: But he hath said enough, by chasing out such instances as are beyond all exceptions for their significaney, and self-evidence; so that the very reading of them, is a sufficient Confutation of this Author's Cavils, and a Justification of them from his frivolous Accusations; which not being very grateful to him (as he confesseth) will be very offensive to others.

Yet (so importune are some sort of Men) he will not leave the point so, but will shew, that this is a fit season for such Alterations) when he hath not shewn the least cause, much less any necessity for making of them; but first he lays the blame on some that are in the Convocation, that should tell him, This is not a season: which he would disprove by this Question: *Is there any thing can make that not to be seasonable, which is always a Duty?* As if it were always a Duty, to make needless Alterations.

2. *Is there any Season in which we are not as much as in us lieth, to seek Peace and ensue it?*

Answer: The Peace of the Church is more to be valued, than of those who disquiet themselves and others in vain. Was it a Season for the Representatives of our Church to declare, when they were not in a condition, They wanted not a tenderness toward Dissenters? And is it not their Season when they are in a condition? (which I heartily wish they were, even for the Dissenters sake) because he hath said, He doubts not but they would agree to the Alterations that are desired.

But suppose, says he, there were never a Dissenter in the Land; I say, we might have a happier and fitter Season, when there would be none that watch for our haltings, and seek occasion to accuse us from our own Concessions, and will reject them with scorn and contempt; and so our Liturgy and Worship, which (the Letter says) was compleat and perfect before, be exposed as not only infirm, but so corrupt, that it

needed Alterations ; and that for very shame the Convocation thought it necessary to make them. But our Author finding all his arguments to be lost, as in p 28. he betakes himself to a sham-plot against those that are not for Alterations, as if because they said, or rather he for them, That they were not reasonable : they had said, the Parliament was illegal, the Government precarious, and the Laws no Laws, it becomes not a Country-Minister to be a Minister of Satan, in falsely accusing his Brethren, who have all owned the present Authority and Laws, and he that blames the want of Connexion in our Collects, should have been more cautious, then first to raise an Objection of his own, and then infer from it such impertinent conclusions as may be mischievous to others. But what think you, says he, if this Government sink? I think our causeless dissensions will be one of the greatest causes : Who sunk the Government under the Royal Martyr? Who had well nigh sunk it a second time under the late King? to whom such multitude of Dissenters addressed Thanks for Suspending the Laws, and promised to obey him without reserve : we have had experience enough who they were that could, after all their Pleas for Liberty, part with their Consciences to save their Lives, though with the loss of their Religion, Laws, and Liberty ; so as their Brethren might perish a little before them. When therefore he would persuade us, that we may have a new Law for the intended Establishment ; I think no Man will be persuaded to run such a risque ; for having many good Laws already for our Established Worship, we may conclude, that as to certainty the old are better. Having thus treated the Members of the Convocation, he takes his Farewel of them, leaving them to their Couch and Consideration ; intimating, that they are all become mighty Politicians, or Tools for them that are so. Who have been made and used as Tools by the late unhappy Politicians is as evident as any matter of fact can be, and I wish I could leave this Country-Minister well in his Wits, to consider whether he be not used as a Tool to destroy the Established Church, by some who think themselves mighty Politicians.

Some REMARKS on a LETTER from a Member of the Convocation.

NO sooner had I finished my Remarks on the Letter of the Country Minister to a Member of the Convocation, but I were encounter'd with another from a Member of the Convocation to his Friend; in which I feared my Opinion would have been oppugned, not only by a greater Authority, but by sharper Arguments than any I had yet met with: But having view'd his Weapons, I found that they were flourish'd and glitter'd with a Rhetorical style, yet they wanted that Logical strength that might enforce them. This encouraged me to take my Pen in hand again, and to enter the List aginst this Master of the Assembly; for I considered, that though his Weapons were keen, yet the Arm that wielded them was but weak, and it was no great danger to wrest them out of his hands, and imploy them against himself: His great flourish was, *A Necessity, an absolute Necessity of yielding to many Alterations in our Established Worship.* This I thought might prove *durum telum*; for, *Necessity hath no Law*, especially when it is Absolute; then, like the Absolute power, it bears down all before it: This lookt somewhat formidably; for I considered that Necessity had destroyed many great and good Men. It was said of that great Hero, the Earl of Strafford, *Illum non tulit Lex verum necessitas non habens Legem*; And of a greater than he we have a Law (*viz.*) of the Jews making, and by that Law, *Oportet mori*, to dye, and dye he did, because it was expedient also for the People.

But that there was an Absolute necessity that Judas should betray his Master; I can no more believe, than that there is a Necessity, That he who is a Member of the Church of Christ, and hath familiarly, eaten of her Bread, and born the Bag too, should lift up his heels and kick at her. I considered therefore what kind of Necessity this might be, for our Opponent grants, there is no necessity in respect of the Church her self, that she should make Alterations: Because, saith he, *p. 1. nothing is more dangerous to Religion, than frequently to make Alterations.* 2. Because an unsteadiness, though in Circumstantial's only, which are always alterable, may become an Argument against the whole, the Multitude not being able to judge

what is Circumstantial, and what is Essential in our Worship; what is in the Power of the Church to alter, and what is not; and are apt to call every Alteration, though in things indifferent, and by variation of times made morally insignificant, to be a change of Religion itself, and so concluding that we have no firm bottom, become Apostates from us to Popery or Atheism. And therefore he thinks the Church of England may be justified, that it hath not been forward on every demand of the Dissenters to unhinge those of her Communion, but hath to the utmost resisted all Alterations, hoping by other less dangerous Methods to heal the Divisions that are among us. By this I perceived the Absolute necessity would not much affect the Church; yet I considered farther, whether there were an Absolute necessity from any Precept that did oblige the Church to make Alterations in the external Parts or Rites of Worship; and I found she had a Power by Precept to see that all things be done decently, and according to her Order and Appointment; and another Precept, *That the People should Obey those that have the Rule over them.* And accordingly the most Primitive Church, of which we read *Acts 2. 45. Continued daily with one accord in the Temple, and in the Apostle's Doctrine and Fellowship; and in breaking of Bread; and in Prayer.* Nor would St. Paul endure any Contention about Circumstantials, contrary to the Custom of the Church, *1 Cor. 11. 16.* Nor can I see this Absolute necessity in the things that are to be altered, because they are confessed to be in their own nature indifferent; and when they fall under a Precept of those whose proper work it is to injoin them, we cannot without Disobedience to our lawful Governors, reject them. Neither can this Necessity affect the Persons for whose sake the Alterations are desired; because if there be nothing sinful in our Communion, it is sinful to separate from it; besides, the Dissenters would take it ill of any Man that should say they cannot be saved in that way of Worship which they have chosen for themselves; and then there is no Absolute necessity for the Church to alter her Constitutions to gain them to her Communion: In a Church where Salvation is to be had, we ought to abide, notwithstanding some improvement circumstances, whose Amendment is desirable. Though there were great Disputes in the Primitive Church about the Place of Worship, Circumcision, and Meats and Days, yet was there no Separation: And the constant Voice of the Church was, *Tà ag'kata tōn nesetērō, Let ancient Customs prevail.* But here Absolute necessity is urged for Alterations, because all other means have been tried, and prove ineffectual to heal our Divisions. To which I Answer.

1. The Acts for Uniformity were much more effectual than any Alterations that the Church can justly make will be, seeing the Dissenters have declared they will not be satisfied with the Alterations of our Ceremonies; or, but expect greater matters than the Church can grant. 2. Experience shows, that they will not acquiesce in such Alterations as may be granted. 3. Because it was not for want of success, that Toleration was granted against the Act for Uniformity; but because it was so successful, and the Common Enemies of our Church perceiving the good effects of that Act, which had well nigh reduced the whole Nation to an Uniformity, with their joynt Interest procured a Toleration; and it needs no proof, That if the Act for Uniformity had made out Dissenters, Toleration and Alterations have made hundreds; so that as there is no *Necessitas in peccatis*, neither is there *Necessitas in malis*, to obtain the Ends which this Author proposes, *namque hoc benevolentia non potest*.

And thus we have put off the first blow of this Absolute necessity, and the second will be as easily warded off; for if there be no Absolute necessity to make any Alterations, then is not absolutely necessary, that we should make them now. For there is no necessity that we should expose our selves to that reproach, which is endeavoured to be fixed on some of us, of being Ecclesiastical Tyrants, who undertaking to mend one hole; actually make two or three. We have, by standing our ground, put to flight one formidable Enemy; and is there an Absolute necessity, that by giving ground, we should bring our selves under the Power of another? And such an Enemy, as our Author says, did once arise, therefore may be suspected of doing it again, take shelter in the Camp of our Common Enemy, and joyned with the Papists against us, endangering the Church and State to utter ruin; *plene* This therefore should blunt the edge of his Absolute necessity.

Page 9. The Author makes the excepted Passages in our Liturgy, and the Ceremonies in our Worship, the whole *Origin* of our Divisions. As if other while blamed by the Church, who of late is an Eminent Minister; As if the Ignorance of some Dissenters, and the Obstinacy of others, that know more, were in so manner culpable; no, nor thought they rail at our Ceremonies as Superstitious, and our Bishops as Antichristian and Tyrannical; and condemn not our Liturgy only, but our Use of our Lord's Prayer. And our Author, contrary to his bounden Duty, abridges in our favour to some of these, while he reflects on the Penitential and Church-censures, which, he says, have been *abolished* in our Division, and *re-*

creased the Mischiefs which they endeavoured to remove; and that they were executed with an unjustifiable Severity: Though if they had been legally executed against the Papist, and such Dissenters as joyned with them, it might have prevented that greater Severity, which was exercised against some whole Colledges, and the Seven Famous Bishops, who were sent to the Tower, in order to their (and in them, to the) destruction of our Religion, Laws, and Liberties, which by their Constancy they preserved to us, however apt we are to despise them, and deal with them as in Forty Two, they were dealt with by the Scottish and Dissenters Malice. What tho' there be some few that are really, but causlessly offended at our Ceremonies, must we for their sakes give offence to the Church of God; we have found concerning the greatest part of the Dissenters, that it is not their *Cannot*, but their *Will not* that keeps them from our Communion; and when their Interest and Advantage requires it, they can Conform; And what necessity is there, that for the sake of a few ignorant, or peevish, and unsatisfiable persons, that will not be pleased with all that we can do, we should confirm them in their obstinacy, by yielding and complying with their humors? Who were not offended at the excepted passages of our Liturgy and Ceremonies only, but at Episcopacy, at our Doctrine, at the whole Liturgy, and even at our Lord's Prayer, which they disused.

The next for which he says there was a pressing necessity, is the late Act for Toleration, for which he gives these Reasons: 1. *Because the Dissenters were driven to take shelter in the Camp of our common Enemy, and joyn with the Papists.* Or rather, the Papists by the Toleration sheltered themselves under the Dissenters: However, it is a good confession of this Author, and shews, that they who strained at a Gnat could swallow Camels: And though one Parliament passed an Act for Toleration, yet another gave such Arguments against it, as are not yet, nor, I believe, can be answered; which are lately Printed in a Treatise entitled, *An Answer to the Letter for Toleration*, p. 28. Nor is it evident, that by the Act for Toleration, the Dissenters are put on as good a bottom of Legal Right, as the Church is; for it is well known, by what means, and for what end a Toleration hath been more than once obtained, which Coleman's Letters do testify; and Toleration implies somewhat more culpable than the Established Government, and never deserved the like protection, having been often rejected. And whereas he desires a reason from him that can give it, *Why we should not abate a few excepted passages in our Liturgy, and two or three Ceremonies?*

I Anſw. Becauſe, as hath been often ſaid, the giving up of theſe will give the Diſſenters no ſatisfaction ; and, becauſe the Remedy hath been worſe than the Diſeaſe, (i. e.) the retaining of our Ceremonies, and excepted paſſages, never cauſed ſo much Impiety, ſo many Sects and Errors, as the laying them aſide hath done ; the Twenty Years War from 40 to 60, and the Thirty Years Animofities laſt paſt, had other Cauſes than what he (very unbecoming a Member of the Church, and, as he calls himſelf, one of the Convocation) terms Trifles, and p. 6. *A Bone of Contention* : The Covenant ſhews what cauſed that War, the deſtruction of Episcopacy Root and Branch, the ſetting up of Presbytery, the dividing of the Revenues of the Church among themſelves, &c. When therefore he calls that unreaſonable Rigor, which enjoyned Uniformity in our Worſhip, he reflects on the Act for Uniformity, and the Canons of the Church, to which he hath ſubſcribed ; ſo that he and his Brethren are more like to loſe their Reputation with the People, tho' he would caſt all the Odium upon us, whom he expects and endeavours to make to be abhorred of the Nation as the Common Enemies of its Peace, and be treated accordingly in every Pariſh where we live. *Did we contend againſt the Arrians,* ſays he, p. 7. *we would not yield them a Letter to end the whole Controverſie?* And are not the Arrians coming in, when the *Athanaſian* Creed is ſo ridiculous, as hath been ſhewn? And did not the Church in *St. Auguſtin's* time, contend as much againſt the *Donatiſts*, who could plead for themſelves, as this Author doth for the Diſſenters? What Article of Faith? What neceſſary requiſite of our Worſhip is it in which any Alterations are intended? This *St. Auguſtin* granted, *Nobiſcum eſtis in Evangelio in Sacramentis idem cantatis Hallelujah, ſed hoc ſolo nomine*; For this only cauſe that they made Diviſions and Separations in and from the Church, he excluded them, not only from the Church, but from Salvation; and it is obſervable, that the *Arrians* did not only come in among the *Donatiſts*, but theſe joyned with the *Arrians* againſt the Church; how confidently ſoever therefore he would aſſure us, that the intended Alterations are only in things indifferent, we cannot take his word for it, for many things have been well intended, the conſequences whereof have proved fatal and deſtructive.

Page 8. *Our Saviour* (he ſays) *preſcribed not the particular Rites and Conſtitutions which the Church made uſe of*: Very true; but when the Church preſcribed the Uſe of them, that all things in the Publick Worſhip might be done decently, and in order, they were judged contentious Perſons that did not conform to them; and therefore I agree

agree with him; that as long as those Forms of Prayer used in our Church, and those Rites and Constitutions which are received, do answer the Ends of their first Establishment, (*viz.*) the Honour of God, and Edification of the People, they ought with constancy alway to be retained: And in what Assembly, not only of the Sectaries, but of any Reformed Church in the World, either for purity of Doctrine, fervency in Devotion, and decency in Worship, is the Honour of God, and the Edification of the People better provided for, than in the approved Assemblies of the Church? But in this which follows, I think, no sober Person can agree with him: (*viz.*) *That when either the infirmity or wickedness of Men makes any Alterations, and administer to Schism and Division, then he says, there ariseth a reason altogether as strong for their Alteration, as there was for their Institution:* That is, we must alter a godly and well-established Worship, as oft as the wickedness of Men requires it: And how such an Established Worship should become mischievous, and so bring on the Church an Obligation (which without guilt cannot be resisted,) to make a change, is a very bold saying: For, Suppose the Papists arguing thus against the Scripture, or against our Liturgy, that it had occasioned many mischievous Schisms and Errors, were it a strong Argument for us to lay them aside? And should we be guilty if we did not?

Page 9. He descends to particulars: And concerning the Cross, p. 10. he says: *I think we have an Obligation upon us, not to be resisted from absolute necessity of the thing, either totally to lay this Ceremony aside, or make such Abatements as may allay our Heats of Contention, and Mischiefs of Separation as have been caused thereby.*

Answer. If I were of the Judgment of this Convocation: Many I would not tarry any longer in the Communion of that Church, which enjoys the Use of the Cross, tho' I were a Dean or Arch-Deacon. But how comes this Man to be more scrupulous than Mr. Baxter? who says, *He will not condemn Ancients or Moderns that use it, nor make any disturbance about it in the Church.* His Opinion is grounded on an unwary Expression, as he calls it, in the Canons: *That by in the Person Baptized is dedicated to the Service of Jesus Christ;* and so attributes a Sacramental effect to it, which belongs only to Baptism. Sure this Person did never consider, that the Church hath declared that Sacrament sufficiently administered where the Cross is omitted; and had he considered the definition of a Sacrament in the Catechism, he might perceive, that no part of that definition agrees with the Cross to make it Sacramental; and when we see that the Dis-

spates for laying aside the Cross, have been improved to the laying aside of Baptism, let the Author consider where the guilt doth lie:

As to the Surplice, p. 11. he says, *Nothing is more unreasonable than the Carvils against it; yet he would have it totally laid aside, and another Habit appointed: And if that other should be laid aside, for the reasons he there gives, we might as easily fit a Garment for the Moon, as one that should please all Men.*

Page 11. *Kneeling at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is the last Constitution of the Church, that he says, he should willingly part with: The rest, it seems, may go with his good will; and so may this also, by what follows: (viz.) I can see no reason that favours either of a Christian Temper or Charity, why to communicate standing, may not be allowed to weak and scrupulous Persons: He can, it seems, see a reason, why the scrupulous Person should forbear that blessed Sacrament, for fear of a fit and prescribed Ceremony; but can see none, why the Sacrament should not be administred to them in their own way. I would ask him, Is it not fit when we pray with the Minister as we ought to do, that the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy Body and Soul to everlasting life, to kneel? Or is it decent one should stand, and another kneel? And is not Obedience in such things, better than sacrificing to our own humours; and making confusion in so solemn an Ordinance? Whether the ancient Communicants did stand or kneel, they did in obedience to the Constitutions of the Church; and so ought we. Hear Mr. Baxter in this case: If it be lawful to take a Pardon from the King upon our knees, I know not what can make it unlawful, to take a sealed Pardon from Christ upon our knees; See Christian Direct. p. 616. And as for kneeling at the Sacrament, since the Rubrick, my Judgment was ever for it: God having made some Gesture necessary, and confined us to none, but left it to humane determination: I shall submit to Magistrates in their proper work. I am not sure, Christ intended his Example as obligatory; but I am sure he hath commanded me Obedience and Peace. p. 411. of the Five Disputations.*

Page 12. *The Liturgy, he saith, is the best that ever was used in any Christian Church: If then we cannot joyn with our Church therein, we cannot joyn with any Christian Church: Yet p. 13. he thinks it absolutely necessary, not only that it be altered now, but every thirty Years. And what example doth he set before us, but the Church of Rome, and the Greek Church, which have several Liturgies; because they consist of several National Governments: but from the beginning of the Reformation, under Edw. 6. was the first Law for an uniform Liturgy; And shall we take example from the Church of Rome, or from our Reformers? It was indeed necessary, that it should be reformed in those days, because all Popish Superstitions could not be*

cast off at once. He tells us, p. 14. *Of many Alterations formerly made, and would fain know a reason why we should not make more.*

I Answer. Because there is not such reason, as was to reform the Liturgies in the Reign of *Edw. 6.* when there was *Crisme*, and *Prayers for the Dead*, and such other things, which *Calvin* called, *Tolerabiles iniquitates*: and *Q. Elizabeth* kept in some things to bring in the *Papists*; and it had good effect: But ours being so well accommodated to *Truth, Piety, and Devotion*, there needs no other Alterations, unless better reasons can be shewed, it being confessedly the best in the Christian World. But, moreover, what good effect hath followed the six hundred Alterations in 1661? Who desireth them at our hands? And their not desiring them, argues they will not be satisfied by them; but they expect such things as they are not willing to ask, knowing they cannot be granted. His *Objections from Tobit*, and the old Translation of the *Psalms*, have been already considered, and so hath that of the *Athanasian Creed*: As to the Liturgy, therefore I commend Mr. *Baxter* to him, and the Dissenters again, p. 76. of *Concord*: I constantly joyn with my Parish Church in Liturgy and Sacraments, and hope so to do while I live: I take the Common Prayer to be better incomparably, than many of the Sermons and Prayers that I hear.

His next charge, p. 15. is against *Excommunication*; which he says, *Is sometime denounced against the best of our People, right or wrong, for some Penny or Two-penny Cause.* This is a gross Scandal, for if any be sued for small matters, if it be due to their Minister, he is very unjust that will withhold it; and the *Excommunication* is issued against such, for the contempt of the Authority; which is practised in all other Churches, even in *Scotland*, as by an Order printed June 1571. ch. 4. *Any small Offence (say they) may justly deserve Excommunication, by reason of the contempt and disobedience of the Offender.*

He comes p. 16. to answer *Objections*: The first is, *That altering any thing in this now Constituted Church, will be like the plucking a Beam out of a well built House, which may endanger the whole Fabrick*: To which he answers, *If all had been of this mind, we could never have Reformed from Popery.* This is very impertinent, for is there no greater reason to reform *False Doctrine*, and *Idolatrous Worship*, than to change innocent and lawful Ceremonies in our well constituted Church; there we are sure we altered for the better, here we are not sure but we may alter for the worse.

Object. 2. *If we once begin to alter, where shall we stop?* his Answer is, *When any thing is proposed to us, which is not fit to be done.* The Answer is insufficient upon his grounds, for he will not have the Church to judge what is fit, but to do what is unjustly demanded by the Dissenters, whom he makes Judges what ought to be altered.

(51)

Object. 3. And he says, *If we yield now, they will still be craving, till they have taken all away:* And there is a crossing of his old Proverb by another: *Give an Inch, and they will take an Ell.*

Obj. 4. That Alterations are required in some things, as was in the Primitive Church. *Answer.* We are not bound to observe all that the Primitive Church did, as their Love-Feasts, and Deaconesses; which is the same, as if we were bound to revive the old Saxon and British Laws: To which the Reply in brief is this: When old Laws or Usages are antiquated and laid aside, by the common consent of those that instituted them, there remains nothing but our due Obedience to those new Ones that are in force. I perceive now, this Champion's Arms grow feeble, and therefore he makes use of his Tongue, and thinks to supply the defect of Reason by railing; and his Bolt is quickly shot; but shot at randome, and hits No-body, for he mistakes his Mark: he aimed at the Prolocutor, by an *Inuendo*, that *he was he who had been promoted in the Church, by him whom he stabs with a Motto: Nolumus leges Angliae mutare:* Which was not spoken by the Prolocutor, but another person, who owed his Preferment to his own merit, and not another's favour; but whoever spake the words, they could not deserve the name of a stab, unless the telling of a Truth be so; and that ancient saying may excuse him: *Amicus Socrates Amicus Plato magis amicus veritas.* But the other stab, that of the Church, is given her by the Author, who complements the Church, as, (*Feab did Almer*) *Art thou in health, my Mother?* And the words are no sooner out of his mouth, but the Sword is in her Bowels; which, as another *Nero*, he unnaturally rips up, though he had been long nourished in them; nor doth he spare him whom he intended to vindicate, by changing the Motto into a *Volumus leges Angliae mutare.* And thus he insults over his dying Mother, as if in his judgment her Case were desperate, being reduced to the *Ultimus Conatus Naturae*, p. 18. That she sits down quietly, and languisheth to death, rather than she will make the least effort to save herself: But (God be thanked) she hath more dutiful Sons than this unnatural *Brutus*.

In the sixth *Object*, p. 18. Our Author having, so much mist his mark, is so much in passion, that he is angry with, and as far as a plain contradiction will reach, stabs himself: The Objection is: *We have no reason to make Alterations for the sake of the Dissenters, because the fault of our Divisions, is not from any Constitutions of ours, but from their obstinacy and perverseness, in unreasonably dissenting from them.* To which his Answer is: *I acknowledge all this to be true; that it is not the fault of the Church by any of its Constitutions, or Impositions, which are all rational and good, but they Only who refuse to conform to them.* Whereas in p. 3. he had affirmed, *That those excepted passages in the Liturgy,*

and those Ceremonies in our Worship had given the whole Origine to those prevailing Evils among us, and therefore thinks it necessary to lay aside those Penal Laws, and Church Censures, which have been inflicted with a Severity beyond what we can justify; and this, he says, hath beightned our Divisions, and increased the Mischief which we endeavoured to remove. If ever I read a contradiction, this is one: What then is our Author's Opinion, but that our Penal Laws, and Church Censures must of absolute necessity be laid aside, and the Fathers of the Church be reconciled to their disobedient Children on their own terms; as if he had never read of those terrible Judgments which were denounced against old Eli, for his fondness towards his profane Sons, who were Sons of Belial, *That would endure no Yoke themselves, and made the People to abhor the Offerings of the Lord*, 1 Sam. 2, 17. And he restrained them not; but though they kicked at the Sacrifices and Offerings of the Lord, yet honoured his Sons more than God: Yet notwithstanding this, he chargeth the Church, as being too obstinate, and obstructing the Peace of the Church, and the Salvation of so many Souls; as if the Peace of the Church, and the Salvation of Souls, were not more probably to be promoted in the Church, than out of it; and the Peace of the Church more likely to be procured by a restraining of those that separate from it, rather than by complying with them, as he adviseth. He tells us, indeed, *That we are Physicians sent to heal those that are sick and infirm; and when they refuse a wholesome Medicine, ought to think of something agreeable to his humor and palate; but if the sick Man become perversish, as he says, and nothing will please him, but what the Physician knows will endanger his life, the Physician ought not in compliance with his humor to hazard his life: A gentle restraint is more absolutely necessary in such cases, than a foolish pity; nor can it be called unreasonable severity; for in such cases, Non persequitur medicus aegrum sed aeger Medicum*: saith St. Augustine.

Object. 7. *If we make those Alterations, how shall we answer the Papists, who will upbraid us with it?* To this he answers: *As well as we did in the first of Q. Elizabeth.* Reply. Not so well; for she altered some things that were superstitious, and yet kept up such a decency as drew in many Papists to the Communion of the Church; as my Lord Cooke observed. 2. He says, *We may alter now, as well as in 1662.* And likely no better; for then, notwithstanding the six hundred Alterations, the Dissenters were Dissenters still. 3. *We may answer the Papists,* he says, *by pleading their Alterations at the Council of Trent.* Whereas that Council, were so far from complying with the then Dissenters, that they made more severe Canons, and enjoined them under their Anathema's; when we onely desire to preserve our own Constitutions, which our Author says, *Are both Reasonable and Religious.*

Object. 8. We shall by these Alterations dissatisfie our own People. Answ. I believe there is more Noise than Truth or Reason in this Objection: There may be, saith he, some few ignorant or weak People that are zealously affected to these matters. But the Apostle accounted them to be the stronger and better instructed Christians, who understood their Christian Liberty as to things indifferent, and were ready to submit to their Governours in such things, for the Peace of the Church, and condemned those that were contentious against the use of them; the People ought not to prescribe to the Church in such things, but the Church to them: Nor is it a sinful supposition in them that do obey, for they do not obey as to Divine Institutions, but as to the Constitutions of the Church; and therefore we do not fear that they will desert us, if we keep our ground. Thus far, saith our Author, I have shewn what necessity is upon us to consent to the Alterations that will be proposed in this present Convocation: A strange kind of necessity, to consent to what we never knew, be it right or wrong. A great Noise was made of consenting to certain Homilies, that should be set forth by Authority of Church and State; but here we must necessarily consent to what will be proposed by some few Men, who by this Man's Authority may impose what they will upon us; but of this he seems to be ashamed, and therefore proceeds to another reason for this necessity, *From the Promise made by the Bishops to K. James; which if not performed, we must expect the general clamour of the People against us, as a base and false sort of Men; who can promise in times of Adversity, and forget all when that is over; and so become the Reproach of every Man.* *Answ.* We are little obliged to this Author for his Misrepresentation of us, and of our Promises, which were conditional; if the Parliament and Convocation should agree. And are the Bishops in more prosperity now, than when they made those Promises? Are they in a condition to perform them now, if they were never so willing?

This is the same, as if one man should extort a promise from another *in duris*, and then so bind him up, that it shall be impossible for him to perform what he promised. The reproach of non-performance will lay on some other and not on him. Let the Bishops be put *in statu quo*, and then see what they will do; but this Objection our Author sufficiently Answers, when he says, *There is no assurance that any one of the Dissenters will come over to us (on our Concessions)* and therefore it is in vain to proceed on this project; for as for his confidence that many would come in; he must know the minds of those many better than they themselves do, if he be assured of it; for the leaders of that multitude who are guided by them, have declared the contrary. And it being the interest of their Ministers, who have a more plentiful income by their conventicles, as well as greater respects, and a larger power than they can

hope for in a Church-Benefice, will never be such self-denying
 men, as to renounce all these Interests, and be brought into the
 Church to the loss of them. But the people, saith our Author, will forsake
 them, and come into us if these Alterations be made.

Ans. On the contrary, its more probable that when we make Al-
 terations without their desire, the Ministers will tell them, we were a-
 shamed of our corrupt Worship, and have altered it in some lesser, but
 have retained the greater matters to which they cannot yeild; there be-
 ing yet many sinful conditions in our conformity; and as the people are
 already in this belief, so they will from our voluntary Alterations con-
 firm them in it, and gain more on their credulity: And from hence the
 Ministers will not be left without excuse, as long as they pretend any one
 sinful term for a Communion with us is retained; and that pretence is like
 to hold as long as it is their interest to suggest it, and so long after all
 that we can grant, we shall still be vexed with their Clamors.

But 2ly, it is said, *We shall by our Alterations give satisfaction to the
 Nation, who expects it, the main Body whereof, he says, stand indifferent-
 ly affected to them and us, and think the things stood upon to be but trifling
 matters.* How the Nation will brook such an accusation, as if like Gallio,
 they cared not for the solemnity of Divine Worship, and were Lao-
 diceans, neither hot nor cold, for that which is Established by Law,
 and hath been so long approved by their practice, let them shew and
 it were a shame if they should not be as zealous for the Established
 Worship, as the Dissenters are for that which hath been so often con-
 demned, though now it be Tolerated.

But there is yet another necessity for Alterations, *because if we do it
 not, most certainly the Parliament will.* This man talks as once Cromwel
 did, who having seized the Keys of the Parliament house, clapt them
 up, and said, *He had now the Parliament in his Pocket.* Most certainly
 the present Parliament will not truckle under such a degenerate Usur-
 per, and instead of thanks incur the Odium of the Nation, seeing this ve-
 ry Author says, *If it come to their hands they may instead of Circumstantial
 alter Essentials, and make a breach on Religion it self to the undoing of all ;*
and this I think is a Scandalum Magnatum, and this he fears will be
done, not only in the case of Orders, but other Particulars, which he could
instance in, of which the least mischief would be totally to extinguish all Con-
vocations for the future, and resolve the whole power of the Church into the
Two Houses of Parliament, and fix the reproach of the Papists on us, That
our Religion is a Parliamentary Religion. For my part I should fear the loss
 of my Ears if I should have thus heard that Great Council, this would
 make what he would have the Church to be, *Felle de seser* on

This Man (as other venomous Animals) keeps the sting in his Tail, on
 the conclusion of his Libel, in Answer to a Third Objection. *That he*
ne

necessary sooner his Reasons befor Alterations, yet it is time for it when so many of the Fathers of the Church, whom he acknowledgeth to be excellent and most Religious persons, and other eminent Men of the Clergy, by their Suspension, st and incapacitated to act in this matter; and if this be now done, when their consent cannot be had, they will renounce it all, and by sticking to the present Form, create a new Schism in the Church; and this he bears is the reason much insisted on to defeat the design and intent of this Convocation. But first I believe, (whatever may be the design of some Men) is not the intent of the Convocation; they may intend the better Establishment of the present Constitution, the Reformation of the Lives and Manners of some of the Clergy, by new Canons and Censures, to be provided against the Ignorance and Idleness of some, and the Irregularity and scandalous Behaviour of others, who either already are, or hereafter shall be admitted into the Ministry of the Church. But let us attend to his Answer to this Objection, which we have p. 24. *Is it possible to imagine, saith he, that those who have so eminently signaliz'd themselves in defence of the Church and been Confessors for it, should turn their hands against it? No, it is affirmed before, that if they were admitted into the Convocation, they would agree to the intended Alterations; and if any should then seporate, they are such as are most perversely bent against Reason and Conscience to do all the wickedness they can to gratify a peevish humour; and therefore, he says, they that make this Objection, have a great deal to Answer for the injury which they do them by this slanderous and vile Imputation.* For my part, I cannot be so confident, that those excellent Men would be so forward to make such Alterations, as this Author says they would; and I see the Objectors are not without Reason on their side; for if they are ready to suffer the loss of all that they have, rather than to offend their Consciences by assenting to some Civil Alterations in the State, (which what the Particulars be, I cannot imagine, and therefore cannot judge of them) it may well be supposed, that they would be so tenderly conscientious in respect to the Constitutions of the Church, as not to assent to any Alterations that concern the safety, honour, and beauty thereof, without important Reasons. But what if they should adhere to the old Form, and not yield to the intended Alterations; why then our Author hath advised for their ruine; For their number, saith he, is so small, their Proselytes will be so few, and the Resentments of the State will be so heavy on them, that they will be immediately crushed, and fall to nothing. Which will be very hard measure, that such excellent Men should not be allowed so much Liberty of Conscience as Anabaptists and Quakers are, though they be known to be Men of sound Doctrine, and of peaceable and harmless Lives: But it is yet their happiness, that such as our Author is, are not made their Judges; for how would deal with those Scare-crows (as he terms them) which Knaves lift up, but none but Fools can be frighted with; would probably be more like the Knave than the Fool.

And to conclude, he thinks his Argument of *Absolute Necessity* so plain, that there can be no opposition, but from them that are afraid of their *Church-power* and *Church-promotions*, when they hear of *Reformation*: And in truth, that word was made an Engine of great mischief in the former Age 1642, when the Church-men suffered more than they fear, now under the present Government, whatever this Author and his Abettors may design; for he seems to threaten us, *That if we will not be contented with a moderate and just Reformation*, he knows not but the Nation may take the matter into their own hands, and bring us to that of *Scotland*, which, he says, we are so much afraid of, and deprive us of all: And then farewell our Church-promotions, and all their *Revenues*, which there will not want other Men to share among themselves, when such a thorow Reformation shall be made as the *Scots* once procured, and have again designed: And therefore I dare not trust the promise of this single person, whoever he be, (for I fear he hath not been as faithful to his former solemn engagements as he ought) That upon our Alterations we shall find all the good success that can be desired; because, as he says, *there are appearances at present, to the contrary*; and they of such an Aspect, as will much abate the Credit which he expects should be given to his promises; we had once very great promises from such a sort of Men, what a glorious King they would make of King *Charles* the First, and they did it; but it was by Martyrdom; and a godly Reformation was promised in the Church, but it proved a thorow Desolation of Episcopacy, Liturgy, and all that was Sacred; and as it was their fault then, so it will be ours now, if we by our too great credulity shall expose our selves to ruine a second time; on a bare promise of a faithless Man.

Thus, Sir, I have reflected on these two Killing Letters, and shall not concern my self to enquire the Authors: They may be Papists, who by such Arts seek to divide, that they may destroy us; nor can I perceive any other end in either Letter, but the carrying on a design of Self-interest, and Secular advantages, on the ruine of the Church. The first Author discovers his palpable Ignorance, the second his visible Malice: The one fights as *Don Quixot*, with Windmills disturbing his Brain; The other acts as the *Fur prædestinatus* under a fatal necessity, by which he would excuse all his Cheats and Robberies, as if he could not do otherwise, being under the power of an Absolute necessity; I shall leave it to the Convocation to conjecture who may be the Authors of these Letters, but that the One is a Minister of the Established Church, and the Other, as he pretends, of the Present Convocation, I cannot be perswaded, though he should swear to it; because by what is matter of fact, such Men have acted contrary to their Oaths, and solemn Subscriptions; and so I take my leave of them.

An Historical ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT CONVOCATION.

THE CONVOCATION being Summon'd by the King's Writ, His Majesty issued out another Commission to thirty Divines, to prepare Matters to be Considered by the Convocation. The Commission is as followeth :

WHEREAS the particular Forms of Divine Worship, and the Rites and Ceremonies appointed to be us'd therein, being Things in their own Nature Indifferent and Alterable, and so acknowledged ; It is but reasonable, that upon weighty and important Considerations, according to the various Exigencies of Times and Occasions, such Changes and Alterations should be made therein, as to those that are in Place and Authority should from time to time seem either Necessary or Expedient.

And whereas the Book of Canons is fit to be Review'd, and made more suitable to the State of the Church ; and whereas there are Defects and Abuses in the Ecclesiastical Courts and Jurisdictions, and particularly there is not sufficient Provision made for the Removing of Scandalous Ministers, and for the Reforming of Manners either in Ministers or People ; And whereas it is most fit that there should be a strict Method prescribed for the Examination of such Persons as desire to be admitted into Holy Orders, both as to their Learning and Manners.

And therefore, out of Our Pious and Princely Care for the Good Order, and Edification, and Unity of the Church of England, committed to our Charge and Care ; And for the Reconciling, as much as is possible, of all Differences a-

'mong Our Good Subjects, and to take away all Occasions of the like for the future, have thought fit to Authorize and Empower You, &c. (and by Nine of You) whereof Three to be Bishops, to Meet from time to time, as often as shall be needful, and to Prepare such Alterations of the Liturgy and Canons, and such Proposals for the Reformation of Ecclesiastical Courts, and to Consider of such other Matters as in Your Judgments may most conduce to the Ends above-mentioned.

The Names of the Commissioners, A. D. 1689.

<i>Tho. Lamplugh</i> , Lord A. Bish. of York.	<i>John Hall</i> , D. D. Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Ox.
<i>Henry Compton</i> , Lord Bishop of London.	<i>John Beaumont</i> , D. D. Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge.
<i>Peter Mews</i> , Lord Bishop of Worcester.	<i>John Manthorpe</i> , D. D. and Mr. of Trinity College in the University of Cambridge.
<i>William Lloyd</i> , Lord Bishop of St. Asaph.	<i>John Goodman</i> , D. D. Archdeacon of Middlesex.
<i>Thomas Sprat</i> , Lord Bishop of Rochester.	<i>Will. Doueridge</i> , D. D. Archd. of Colchester.
<i>Thomas Sprat</i> , Lord Bishop of Carlisle.	<i>John Rattely</i> , D. D. Archd. of Canterbury.
<i>Jonathan Trelawny</i> , Ld. Bishop of Exeter.	<i>Charles Aston</i> , D. D. Archd. of Essex.
<i>Gilbert Burnet</i> , Lord Bishop of Salisbury.	<i>Thomas Tenison</i> , D. D. Archdeacon of London.
<i>Humphrey Humphrey</i> , Ld. Bishop of Bangor.	<i>John Scott</i> , D. D. Prebendary of St. Pauls, London.
<i>Nicholas Searisford</i> , Ld. Bishop of Chester.	<i>Edward Fowler</i> , D. D. Prebendary of Gloucester.
<i>Edward Stillingfleet</i> , late Dean of St. Pauls, Lond. now Bishop of Worcester.	<i>Robert Grove</i> , D. D. Prebendary of St. Pauls, London.
<i>Simon Patrick</i> , late Dean of Peterborough, now Bishop of Chichester.	<i>John Williams</i> , D. D. Prebendary of St. Pauls, London.
<i>John Tillotson</i> , D. D. late Dean of Canterbury, now Dean of St. Pauls, Lond.	
<i>Rich. Meagor</i> , D. D. Dean of Winchester.	
<i>John Sharp</i> , D. D. late Dean of Norwich, now Dean of Canterbury.	
<i>Rich. Kidder</i> , D. D. Dean of Peterborough.	
<i>Henry Aldridge</i> , D. D. Dean of Christ Church, Oxford.	
<i>Will. Jans</i> , D. D. Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford.	

What things were debated by them, are not yet communicated to the Convocation; only it is known, that the present Prolocutor, and some other Learned and Reverend Divines, deserted them, as disliking several Proposals, which the rest insisted on.

The

The Particular Acts and Adjournments

OF THE
CONVOCATION

From December the 4th, 1689.

THE Litany was read by a Bishop, for some days in Latine, there being only this Supplication added, after the Prayers for the Bishops:

That it may please Thee to inspire with Thy Holy Spirit this Convocation, and to preside over it, to lead us into all Truth, which is according to Godliness.

At other times when there was no Sermon, this Prayer for the Parliament was constantly used:

MOST Gracious God who dost Rule all Men, and Govern all Things, be graciously present, we beseech Thee, with the three Estates of the Kingdom in Parliament assembled, under the Government of our most Gracious Princes William and Mary; assist them with the Spirit of Counsel and Peace, whereby they may be preserved in one Mind and Accord, and also may be inspired with the Love of Thee, and Brudy the Publiok Welfare; that whatsoever Laws, by their joynt Suffrages shall be obtain'd, being established by our Lord and Lady, the King and Queen, may establish Righteousness and Peace to us, and confirm them to our Posterities for ever, to the increase of all Vertue, and the Eternal Glory of Thy Name, by and for Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Then follow'd these Five Collects: I. The Collect on St. Simon and Jude's Day, O Almighty God, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets &c.

II. The Collect for Good Friday, Almighty and Everlasting God, Oh, whose Spirit, &c.

III. Collect, Almighty God who by thy Son Jesus Christ didst give to the Holy Apostles many excellent Gifts, and commandst them Earnestly to feed thy Flock, Make, we beseech thee, all Bishops and Pastors diligently to preach thy Holy Word; and the People obediently to follow the same, that they may receive the Crown of Everlasting Glory, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

IV. The Collect on the Fifth Sunday after Trinity, Grant we beseech Thee, &c.

V. Collect, O Lord God the Father of Light and Fountain of all Wisdom, we thy humble and unworthy servants, prostrating ourselves at thy Right hand, beseech thee, that we who are here met together in thy Name, under the Government of our most Gracious King WILLIAM, and Queen MARY, being assisted by thy heavenly Grace, may so search out, meditate, handle, and discern all things which may promote thy Honour and Glory, and the Good of thy Church, that thy Spirit, which heretofore did preside over the Council of the Apostles, may also preside over this our Council, and lead us into all that Truth which is according to Godliness; that we who have worthily and seriously, utterly renounced the Errors of our holy Reformation, the Corruptions and Superstitions, together with the Papal Tyranny which heretofore did here abound, may all of us firmly and constantly hold the Apostolick and truly Catholick Faith, and without fear, may duly serve thee with a pure Worship, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then follows the Prayer of St. Chrysostome: Almighty God who hast given us Grace, at this time, &c.

Then the Members of the Convocation were called over.

An Alphabetical Catalogue of all the Names of the Members of the Upper and Lower House of this present CONVOCATION.

William, Ld. Bp. of St. Asaph.	Griffin Lloyd, B.D.	John Edwards, A.M.
Geor. Briggs, D.D. Dean of St. Asaph.	Proctors for the Clergy.	
Samuel Davies, L.D. Proctor for the Chapter.	Bath and Wells.	
William, Lord Bishop of St. Asaph,	Ralph Bathurst, D.D. Dean of Bath and Wells.	
Arch-Deacon of St. Asaph.	Rich. Busby, D.D. Proct. for the Chapter.	

Edwin Sandys, A.M. } Archd. of *Wells.*
 } of *Bath.*

Edw. Waple, B.D. } of *Taunton.*

William Clement, A.M. } *Giles Pooley,*
 } *A.M. Proctors for the Clergy.*

Humphrey, Ld. Bp. of Bangor.

John Jones, D.D. Dean of Bangor.

Rob. Foulke, A.M. Proct. for the Chapt.

Humphrey, Ed. Bp. of Bangor, Arch-
 deacon of Bangor and Anglesey.

Fran. Lloyd, A.M. Archd. of Merioneth.

Robert Wynne, A.M. John Williams,
 } *A.M. Proctors for the Clergy.*

Gilbert, Ld. Bp. of Bristol.

William Levent, D.D. Dean of Bristol.

Steph. Cression, A.M. Proct. for the Chap.

John Feilding, D.D. Archd. of Dorset.

Roger Mander, D.D. Rich. Roderick,
 } *B.D. Proctors for the Clergy.*

Canterbury

John Tillotson, D.D. then Dean of Can-
 terbury, now Dean of St. Paul's Lond.

Proctor for the Chapter.

Joh. Bateley, Archdeacon of Canterbury.

George Thomas, D.D. John Cooke, A.M.
 } *Proctors for the Clergy.*

Simon, Ld. Bp. of Winchester.

Francis Hawkins, B.D. Dean of Chis-
 chester.

Rich. Cradock, B.D. Proct. for the Chapt.

Josias Pleydell, A.M. Archdeacon of
 Chichester.

Joseph Sayer, B.D. Archd. of Exeter.

Camper Richard, A.M. David Mar-

tin, D.D. Proctors for the Clergy.

Thomas, Ld. Bp. of St. Davids.

John Ellis, D.D. Præcentor.

Spencer Lucy, A.M. Proct. for the Chapt.

Tim. Halton, D.D. Archd. of St. Davids.

Geo. Owen, D.D. Archd. of Carmarthen.

Tho. Strainoe, B.D. Archd. of Brecknock.

Joh. Williams, A.M. Archd. of Cardigan.

Tho. Sandys, A.M. William Powell, A.M.

Proctors for the Clergy.

Ely.

John Spencer, D.D. Dean of Ely.

John Moore, D.D. proct. for the Chapt.

Will. Saywell, D.D. Archdeacon of Ely.

Samuel Birch, D.D. Nicholas Gouge,

A.M. proctors for the Clergy.

Jonathan, Ld. Bp. of Exeter.

Rich. Annesley, D.D. Dean of Exon.

Geo. Hooper, D.D. proct. for the Chapter.

Edward Lake, D.D. Archd. of Exeter.

Edw. Drew, A.M. Archd. of Cornwall.

Fra. Fulwood, D.D. Archd. of Tormes.

William Read, A.M. Archd. of Barum.

John James, D.D. Tho. Long, Senior,

B.D. proctors for the Clergy.

Gloucester.

William Fane, D.D. Dean of Glouce-

ster, Prolocutor.

Rich. Duke, A.M. proctor for the Chapt.

Tho. Hyde, D.D. Archd. of Gloucester.

Abraham Gregory, D.D. Rich. Parsons,

L.D. Proctors for the Clergy.

Herbert, Ld. Bp. of Hereford.

George Benson, D.D. Dean of Hereford.

Tho. Rogers, D.D. proctor for the Chapt.

Saml. Benson, A.M. Archd. of Hereford.

Adam Orsley, A.M. Archd. of Salop.

William Johnson, D.D. Rich. Bulkley,

A.M. proctors for the Clergy.

William, Ld. Bp. of Landaffe.

Henry Bull, D.D. Archd. of Landaffe.

Jonathan Edwards, proctor for the

Chapter.

William Frampton, A.M. ——— Jenkins,

A.M. proctors for the Clergy.

Thomas, Ld. Bp. of Richfield

and Coventry.

Lancelot Addison, D.D. Dean of Rich-

field.

John Willes, D.D. proctor for the Chapt.

Lancelot Addison, D.D. Archdeacon of

Coventry.

Fra. Askenbush, A.M. Archd. of Darby.

Stafford.

Salop.

Barnabas

the King's Professor in *Oxford*; Dr. *Jane* had the Majority of Voices; yet great endeavours were used to prefer the Dean, whose Party having argued much for it, but saw themselves overcome, did at last yeild to the Election of Dr. *Jane*, the Votes for him being double to the others.

The first thing that was done in the Convocation, after the choosing the Prolocutor, was, *Decemb. 4th*, when the Commission from the King was read, there being present twelve Bishops; the Commission was as follows:

William and Mary, by the Grace of GOD, King and Queen of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defenders of the Faith, &c. **To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting:** Whereas, in and by one Act of Parliament made at *Westminster*, in the 25th Year of the Reign of King *Henry* the 8th, Reciting, That whereas the King's Humble and Obedient Subjects, the Clergy of this Realm of *England*, had not only acknowledged according to the Truth, that the Convocation of the same Clergy, were always, had been, and ought to be Assembled only by the King's Writ, but also submitting themselves to the King's Majesty, had promised in *Verbo Sacerdotis*, that they would never from thenceforth presume to Attempt, Alledge, Claim, or put in Ure, or Enact, Promulge, or Execute any new Canons, Constitutions, Ordinances Provincial or others, or by whatsoever other Name they should be called in the Convocation, unless the said King's most Royal Assent and License might to them be had, to Make, Promulge and Execute the same; and that the said King did give his Royal Assent and Authority in that behalf:

It was therefore Enacted by the Authority of the said Parliament, according to the said Submission and Petition of the said Clergy, among other things, That they, nor any of them from thenceforth should Enact, Promulge or Execute any such Canons, Constitutions or Ordinances Provincial,

' by whatsoever Name they might be called in their Convo-
 ' cations in time coming, which always should be Assembled
 ' by Authority of the King's Writ, unless the same Clergy
 ' might have the King's most Royal Assent and License, to
 ' Make, Promulge and Execute, such Canons, Constitutions
 ' and Ordinances, Provincial or Synodal, upon Pain of every
 ' one of the said Clergy doing contrary to the said Act, and
 ' being thereof Convict, to suffer Imprisonment, and make
 ' Fines at the King's Will.

' And further, by the said Act it is Provided, That no Ca-
 ' nons, Constitutions or Ordinances should be Made, or put
 ' in Execution within this Realm, by Authority of the Con-
 ' vocations of the Clergy, which should be contrariant or re-
 ' pugnant to the King's Prerogative Royal, or the Customs,
 ' Laws or Statutes of this Realm, any thing contained in the
 ' said Act to the contrary thereof notwithstanding.

' And lastly, It is also Provided by the said Act, That such
 ' Canons, Constitutions, Ordinances and Synodals Provincial,
 ' which then were already made, and which then were not
 ' contrariant or repugnant to the Laws, Statutes and Customs
 ' of this Realm, nor to the Damage or Hurt of the King's Pre-
 ' rogative Royal ; should then still be Used and Executed as
 ' they were before the making of the said Act, until such time
 ' as they should be Viewed, Searched, or otherwise Ordered
 ' and Determin'd by the Persons mentioned in the said Act,
 ' or the most part of them, according to the Tenor, Form
 ' and Effect of the said Act, as by the said Act, among divers
 ' other things more fully and at large, it doth and may ap-
 ' pear.

' And whereas the particular Forms of Divine Worship, and
 ' Rites and Ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being
 ' Things of their own Nature Indifferent and Alterable, and
 ' so acknowledged, it is but reasonable, that upon weighty
 ' and important Considerations, according to the various Ex-
 ' igency of Times and Occasions ; such Changes and Altera-
 ' tions

tions should be made therein, as to those that are in Place and Authority, should from time to time, seem either necessary or expedient.

And whereas the Book of Canons is fit to be Reviewed, and made more suitable to the State of the Church : And whereas there are divers Defects and Abuses in the Ecclesiastical Courts and Jurisdictions ; and particularly there is not sufficient Provision made for the removing of Scandalous Ministers, and for the Reformation of Manners either in Ministers or People ; And whereas it is most fit, that there should be a strict Method prescribed for the Examination of such Persons as desire to be admitted into Holy Orders, both as to their Learning and Manners : Know ye , That We, for divers urgent and weighty Causes and Considerations, Us thereunto moving, of Our especial Grace, certain Knowledge, and meer Motion, have by Vertue of Our Prerogative Royal, and Supream Authority in Causes Ecclesiastical, Given and Granted, and by these Presents do give and grant, full, free and lawful Liberty, Licence, Power and Authority, into the Right Reverend Father in God, *Henry* Lord Bishop of *London*, President of this Present Convocation, for the Province of *Canterbury*, (upon the Suspension of the Lord Arch-bishop of *Canterbury*) during this present Parliament now Assembled ; and in his Absence, to such other Bishops as shall be appointed President thereof, and to the rest of the Bishops of the same Province, and to all Deans of Cathedral Churches, Arch-Deacons, Chapters and Colledges, and the whole Clergy of every several Dioceſs, within the said Province ; That they the said Lord Bishop of *London*, or other President of the said Convocation, and the rest of the Bishops, and other the said Clergy of this present Convocation within the said Province of *Canterbury*, or the greatest number of them, whereof the President of the said Convocation to be always one, shall and may from time to time, during this present Parliament, Confer, Treat, Debate,

‘ Consider, Consult, and Agree of and upon such Points, Mat-
 ‘ ters, Causes and Things, as We from time to time shall Pro-
 ‘ pose, or cause to be proposed by the said Lord Bishop of
 ‘ *London*, or other President of the said Convocation, com-
 ‘ ercing Alterations and Amendments of the Liturgy and Canons,
 ‘ and Orders, Ordinances and Constitutions for the Reforma-
 ‘ tion of Ecclesiastical Courts, for the Removing of Scandalous
 ‘ Ministers, for the Reformation of Manners either in Mini-
 ‘ sters or People, and for the Examination of such Persons as
 ‘ desire to be admitted into Holy Orders, and all such other
 ‘ Points, Causes and Matters as We shall think Necessary and
 ‘ Expedient, for advancing the Honour and Service of Al-
 ‘ mighty GOD, the Good and Quiet of the Church, and the
 ‘ better Government thereof.

‘ And we do also by these Presents, Give and Grant unto
 ‘ the said Lord Bishop of *London*, or other President of the said
 ‘ Convocation, and to the rest of the Bishops of the said Pro-
 ‘ vince of *Canterbury*, and unto all Deans of Cathedral Church-
 ‘ es, Arch-Deacons, Chapters and Colledges, and the whole
 ‘ Clergy of every severall Diocess within the said Province,
 ‘ full, free and lawful Liberty, Licensé, Power and Authority,
 ‘ That they the said Lord Bishop of *London*, or other President
 ‘ of the said Convocation, and the rest of the said Bishops, and
 ‘ other the Clergy of the same Province, or the greatest Num-
 ‘ ber of them that shall be present in Person, or by their Pro-
 ‘ xies, shall and may from time to time, draw into Forms,
 ‘ Rules, Orders, Ordinances, Constitutions and Canons, such
 ‘ Matters as to them shall seem Necessary and Expedient for
 ‘ the Purposes abovementioned ; and the same set down in
 ‘ Writing, from time to time, to Exhibit and Deliver, or cause
 ‘ to be Exhibited and Delivered unto us, to the end that We,
 ‘ as Occasion shall require, may thereupon have the Advice
 ‘ of Our Parliament: And that such, and so many of the said
 ‘ Canons, Orders, Ordinances, Constitutions, Matters, Causes
 ‘ and Things as shall be thought Requisite and Convenient by
 ‘ Our

Our said Parliament, may be presented to Us in due Form, for
 Our Royal Assent, if upon Mature Consideration thereof, We shall
 think fit to Enact the same. In Witness whereof, We have
 caused these Our Letters to be made Patent; Witness Ourselves at
 Westminster, the 30th Day of November, in the First Year of Our
 Reign,

Per Breve de privato Sigello, BURKER.

Vera Copia, J. C. N. P.

His Majesty's Gracious Message to the Convocation, sent by the
 Earl of Nottingham, as followeth:

WILLIAM R.

His Majesty has Summon'd this Convocation, not only because
 'tis usual upon holding of a Parliament, but out of a Pious
 Zeal to do every thing that may tend to the best Establishment of
 the Church of England, which is so eminent a Part of the Reforma-
 tion, and is certainly the best suited to the Constitution of this Go-
 vernment; and therefore does most signally deserve, and shall al-
 ways have both His Favour and Protection; and he doubts not,
 but that you will assist Him in promoting the Welfare of it, so that
 no Prejudices, with which some Men may have laboured to possess
 you, shall disappoint His good Intentions, or deprive the Church
 of any Benefit from your Consultations. His Majesty therefore
 expects, that the Things that shall be proposed, shall be calmly
 and impartially Considered by you, and assures you, that he will
 offer nothing to you but what shall be for the Honour, Peace, and
 Advantage both of the Protestant Religion in general, and particular-
 ly of the Church of England.

The Bishops ADDRESS:

WE Your Majesty's most Dutiful Subjects, the Bishops and Clergy of
 the Province of Canterbury, in Convocation assembled, having
 received Your Majesty's Gracious Message, together with a Commission from
 Your Majesty, by the Earl of Nottingham, hold ourselves bound in Grati-
 tude and Duty, to return our most Humble Thanks and Acknowledgements
 of the Grace and Goodness expressed in Your Majesty's Message, and the
 Zeal You shew in it for the Protestant Religion in general, and the Church
 of England in particular, and of the Trust and Confidence reposed in us
 by this Commission: We look on these Marks of Your Majesty's Care and Fa-
 vour, as the Continuance of the great Deliverance Almighty God wrought

for us by Your Means, in making You the Blessed Instrument of Preserving us from falling under the Cruelty of Popish Tyranny; for which as we have often Thanked Almighty God, so we cannot forget that high Obligation and Duty which we owe to Your Majesty; and on these new Assurances of Your Protection and Favour to our Church, we beg leave to renew the Assurance of our constant Fidelity and Obedience to Your Majesty, Whom we Pray GOD to continue Long, and Happily to Reign over us.

This Address was not approved of by the Lower House, who thought they had the Privilege (wanting the Books of Presidents) to present one of their own drawing; but that not being admitted, it was voted by the Lower House, to make some Amendments; which were not agreed on, till after a Conference with the Bishops, the Lower House insisting, that they would confine themselves to the King's Declaration, and to what concerned especially the Church of England; whereupon a Conference was desired, and a Committee appointed to attend the Lords: The Conference was managed chiefly between the Bishop of *Salisbury*, and the Prolocutor; the Bishop urged, That the Church of *England* was not distinguished from other Protestant Churches, but by its Hierarchy and Revenues, and that it was an equivocal Expression; for if Popery should prevail, it would be called the Church of *England* still. To which the Prolocutor answered, That the Church of *England* was distinguished by its Doctrine, as it stands in the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies, as well as by its Hierarchy, and that the Term of Protestant Churches was much more Equivocal, because *Socinians*, *Anabaptists*, and *Quakers* assumed that Title. After this, we heard no more Reply, but a Committee of the Convocation, in the Lower House, having drawn up another Form, it was consented to. And Thanks were given to the Prolocutor, for managing the Conference.

And the Address, as agreed on, to be Presented, was as followeth:

WE Your Majesty's most Loyal and most Dutiful Subjects, the Bishops and Clergy of the Province of *Canterbury*, in Convocation Assembled, having received a most Gracious Message from Your Majesty, by the Earl of *Nottingham*, hold ourselves bound in Duty and Gratitude, to return our most Humble Acknowledgments for the same; and for the Pious Zeal and Care Your Majesty is pleased to express therein for the Honour, Peace, Advantage, and Establishment of the Church of *England*: Where-

by, we doubt not, the Interest of the Protestant Religion in all other Protestant Churches, which is dear to us, will be the better secured under the Influence of Your Majesty's Government and Protection. And we crave leave to assure Your Majesty, That in pursuance of that Trust and Confidence You repose in us, we will consider whatsoever shall be offered to us from Your Majesty, without Prejudice, and with all Calmness and Impartiality: And that we will constantly Pay the Fidelity and Allegiance, which we have all Sworn to Your Majesty and the Queen; Whom we pray GOD to continue Long, and Happily to Reign over us.

This Address was presented on *Thursday* the 12th of *December*, in the Banqueting-Chamber.

His Majesty's most Gracious Answer to the Bishops Address, &c.

My LORDS,

I Take this Address very kindly from the Convocation: You may depend upon it, that all I have promised, and all that I can do for the Service of the Church of *England*, I will do: And I give you this new Assurance, that I will improve all Occasions and Opportunities for its Service.

I. In the Adjournments it was first debated, What Proxies each Man might have, from those that were absent; and it was agreed, that one Man might have four.

II. Whether those Bishops that had Arch-Deaconries annexed to their Bishopricks, might grant Proxies to any Member of the Lower House of Convocation, to Vote for them.

III. Whether such Proctors for the Clergy, as had not appeared, might grant their Proxies; Which was resolved in the Affirmative, Presidents being found for the same.

Then it was complained, that the Convocation wanted the Books of Presidents belonging to the Convocation; and it being said, that the Bishop of *Asaph*, and Dean *Tillotson* had such Books, they were desired to bring them in; which was done, and a Committee appointed to inspect them, and report what Presidents could be found, that might concern the Convocation, which is yet under Examination. It was proposed, that a Committee might be continued during the Adjournment, to prepare things against their Meeting; but this was denied. Complaint was made of some dangerous Books printed contrary to the Canons, as that against the Creed of *Athanasius*; which was sent to the Bishops to be Censured by them. A Reverend Person made a Speech on the behalf of the Bishops under Suspension, that something might be done to qualify them to sit in Convocation, but so as the Convocation might not incur any danger; which being not in their Cognizance, it was waved, and left to farther Consideration.

The MINUTE PARTICULARS

Observ'd in the

Proceedings of the CONVOCAATION.

4 December, 1689.

Prayers being ended, the King's Commission brought in with a Message by the Earl of Nottingham, both which being read, the Bishops went to Jerusalem-Chamber, from whence they sent a Copy of the King's Message, with the Form of an Address, to which they desir'd the Concurrence of this House.

Dean of Windsor, St. Paul's, Exon, desired by this House, to attend the Lords, to know whether they were all consenting to the said Address, and likewise to pray a Copy of the said Commission.

They Reported from the Lords, That they were consenting to the said Address, and order'd to be sent down to this House, and desir'd their Concurrence; and that they would order a Copy of the Commission. Then a Question arose, Whether this House should concur with the Form recommended by the Bishops, or Address the King in their own Form?

Resolv'd by this House, To return Thanks to the King in a Form of their own.

Dean of Peterborough, Dean of Christ-Church, desir'd to attend the Lords with their Resolution.

Order'd, That nothing of any moment be agreed upon, or pass into an Act, till the old Books of former Convocations are brought in.

Order'd, That Mr. Pleydell's Proxy be withdrawn.

The Bishops desiring a Conference,

Order'd, That the Dean of Christ-Church, Chichester, Litchfield, Bristol, St. Paul's, Peterborough, Drs. Hooper, Maurice, Willis, be desired to attend the Lords, to acquaint them, that the House consents to a Conference, and have appointed Managers, but desire a longer time to prepare Instructions for them.

The Lords appointed Friday Morning, nine of the Clock, to be attended about the Conference.

Order'd, That the same Persons, together with the Prolocutor, Deans of Windsor, Exon, Dr. Battely, and Archd. Feilding, be appointed a Committee, to draw up Instructions, to Morrow at nine of the Clock. *Adjourn'd to the 6th.*

6 Decemb. Prayers ended, the old Books, and the Copy of the Commission brought in. The Committee brought in an Address, with Alterations, with the Reasons why they cannot concur with the Bishops in their Form, in these words, *We are desirous to confine our Address to his Majesty's most Gracious Message, and to those things only therein, which concern the Church of England; which Reasons being approved of, and agreed to by this House, it was carried up to the Lords by the said Committee; who Reported from their Lordships, That what Alterations this House makes in their Lordships Address, ought to be specified in the respective Lines thereof. in particular Exceptions.*

Order

Order'd, That the Form of Amendments sent down by the Lords, be referred to the same Committee, to meet to Morrow at eight of the Clock, at Dr. Busby's Chamber, saving this House's right of Proceedings, in their own way, in this and the like cases, where there is no Precedent to the contrary.

Order'd, That the House adhere to the Reason of their Amendments, which was offered to the Lords.

Order'd, That Drs, Tenison, Fuller, Beveredge, Hamond, Halton, Thorpe, Parsons, Gregory, Grove, Saywell, Alston, Mander, Woodward, Goodman, Busby, Younger, Moore, Stanley, Mr. Kimberley, Richardson, Ottley, Buckley, and Skelton, be appointed a Committee, to inspect the old Books belonging to the Convocation, and where they find them defective, to offer new Orders, for the Approbation of this House: Eleven whereof to be a *Quorum*, and to meet at three this Afternoon at Dr. Tenison's Library.

Adjourn'd till to Morrow.

7 Decemb. Prayers ended, the Committee return'd the Bishops Form of Address Alter'd and Amended according to the order of the House Yesterday, which being approv'd of by this House, they were desir'd to carry it up to the Lords. *Adj. till 9.*

9 Decemb. Prayers ended, the Committee return'd the Bishops Form of Address, Alter'd according to the order of the House on Friday, which being approved of, they were again to carry it up to the Lords, (being prevented by the Adjournment on Wednesday, from attending their Lordships with it) who brought down three Reasons from their Lordships, why the express mention of the Protestant Religion, should be inserted in the Address, which are as follow: 1. *Because it is the known denomination of the common Doctrine of the Western part of Christendom, in opposition to the Errors and Corruptions of the Church of Rome.* 2. *Because the leaving out this, may have ill consequences, and be liable to strange constructions, both at home and abroad, among Protestants as well as Papists.* 3. *Because it agrees with the general Reason offer'd by the Clergy for their Amendments, since this is expressly mentioned in the King's Message; and in this the Church of England being so much concerned, the Bishops think it ought still to stand in the Address.*

Then a Question arose, Whether the consideration of these Reasons should be referred to a Committee, or debated in a full House.

Resolv'd, That it be debated.

After the debate, the House agreed, that after these words in the Address, (*viz.*) *The Establishment of the Church of England* it be immediately added, *Whereby we doubt not the Interest of all the Protestant Churches, which is dear to us, will under the influence of Your Majesty's Government, be the better secured.*

Order'd, The Lords desiring a Committee from this House, to inspect the old Books, That Drs, Tenison, Mauder, Woodward, Halton, Moore, Gregory, Mr. Skelton and Ottley, be appointed a Committee, to attend the Lords this Afternoon, at five a Clock, to inspect the old Books.

Adjourn'd till to Morrow.

10 Decemb. Prayers ended, a Message came down from the Lords, for the Managers to attend their Lordships; who Reported from their Lordships, That they desire the reason of this House, why instead of the *Protestant Religion*, they insert *Protestant Churches.*

Order'd, That the same Managers be appointed to draw up their Reasons immediately; who return'd their Reason in these words: *We being the Representative of a form'd establish'd Church, do not think fit to mention the word Religion, any further*

ther, then it is the Religion of some form'd establish'd Church. Which Reason being approv'd, it was carried up to the Lords.

The Lords return'd the Amendments with some Alterations, in these words: *After the words (Establishment of the Church of England) add, Whereby we doubt not, the Interest of the Protestant Religion, in this and all other Protestant Churches, which is dear to us, will be the better secured under your Majesty's Government and Protection.*

Order'd by the House, That the words, *this and*, be omitted.

The Prolocutor, at the Request of the House, gave an Account of the Conference with the Lords.

Order'd, That the Thanks of the House be given to the Prolocutor, for Managing the Conference with the Lords. *Adjourn'd till to Morrow.*

11 Decemb. Prayers ended, the Prolocutor Reported from the Lords, That they had agreed to all the Amendments with this House; and that they would give this House an account this Morning, when it would be a fit time to wait upon his Majesty with the said Address.

Then the House desir'd the Prolocutor to attend the Lords, and humbly to represent to their Lordships, That there are several Books of very dangerous consequence to the Christian Religion, and the Church of England particularly; Notes upon *Athanasius* Creed, and two Letters relating to the present Convocation, newly come abroad; and to desire their Lordships Advice, in what way, and how far, safely, without incurring the Penalty of the Statute 25 H. 8. the Convocation may proceed, in the preventing the Publishing the like Scandalous Books for the future, and inflicting the Censure of the Church, according to the Canons provided in that behalf, upon the Authors of them.

Then the Prolocutor acquainted the House, That their Lordships received the Message very kindly, and promised to take it into consideration; And also, that this House is desired to attend their Lordships at the Banqueting-House to Morrow at three of the Clock, to present the said Address to his Majesty. *Adj. to Friday.*

13 Decemb. Prayer ended.

Adjourn'd till to Morrow.

Prayers ended, a Copy of the King's Answer to the Address, sent down from the Lords.

The Prolocutor acquainted the House, That the President had declared his sense of the ill consequence of those Books that were sent up from this House, to their Lordships; and that upon inquiry, he could not receive any satisfaction, how far the Convocation might proceed in that affair, but he would as far as lay in him, take further order about it.

Agreed by this House, That the Prolocutor return Thanks to the President for the care he hath taken about our Proposal concerning the Books, and to desire his Lordship to proceed further in it.

Then it was proposed by the Lords, to appoint a Committee of both Houses to sit during the Recess.

After some debate,

Resolved, That this House does not consent to appoint any Committee during the said Recess.

Adjourn'd to the 24th of January.